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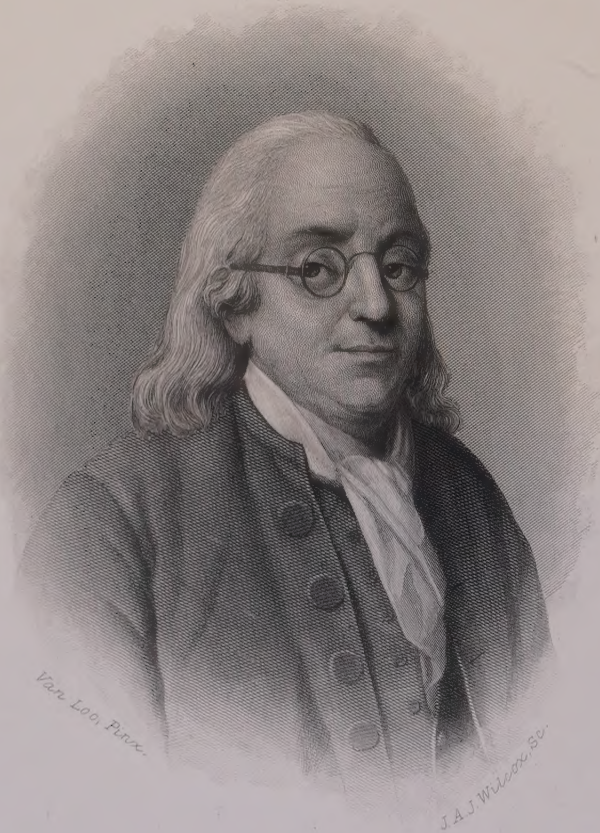

Franklin

FRANKLIN IN FRANCE.

From Original Documents,

MOST OF WHICH ARE NOW PUBLISHED FOR THE FIRST TIME.

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BY

EDWARD E. HALE
AND
EDWARD E. HALE, Jr.

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ROBERTS BROTHERS.
1887.

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PREFACE.

WHEN BENJAMIN FRANKLIN died, in 1790, he left to his grandson, William Temple Franklin, the largest collection of his papers. He had always been careful in the preservation of those letters and other documents which he thought of importance. Among them was the correspondence, official and private, which he maintained in France. Indeed, had our Diplomatic Service been organized in his day as it is in ours, many of these papers would have remained in Paris, as belonging to the archives of the American Legation.

Temple Franklin, as he is generally called, took the idea that in his grandfather's papers he had a mine of wealth; and at various periods of his life he tried to sell them or parts of them. He so far succeeded as to make a bargain with the publisher Colburn, in London, who brought out two editions together in 1818, — one in quarto and one in octavo. A good deal of disgust was created in America that these editions were not placed favorably on the American market. Colburn subsequently issued what he called new editions, which are simply the old editions with new titlepages. In these editions Temple Franklin, and the editor lent him by Colburn, reprinted many of Franklin's more important publications. They also printed for the first time a large number of letters, taken from the collection which Dr. Franklin had bequeathed to his grandson. Colburn soon found that Temple Franklin could not be relied on as an editor, and furnished the clerk who has

been spoken of, to quicken his sluggish methods in dealing with his material.

It is believed that Temple Franklin then wanted to print a much more complete collection. Certainly, the collection which he does print is far from complete. It was evidently not made on the principle of selecting the most interesting or the most important documents. He seems to have reserved those of the later years of Franklin's stay in Europe, with reference to a second series, for which Colburn had perhaps given him some hopes, to be published when the success of the first was assured. No other explanation can be given for the omission of the last half of the correspondence. For some reason it is clear that the letters of dates after 1780 have been much less used than those before.

It has indeed been charged that Temple Franklin had political reasons or prejudices, which prevented him from using as he might have done the material in his hands. But Mr. Bigelow has shown that this charge is unfair.

What happened was that the English public did not care much for Temple Franklin's work. It did not meet with such a sale as justified Colburn in attempting the second series, which till the day of his death Temple Franklin thought possible.

After the publication of this collection Temple Franklin went to Paris. He married there, and died soon after, on the 25th of May, 1823.

The manuscripts meanwhile, which had been partially edited, were left in London. Dr. Sparks returned from London, where he was preparing his great edition of Franklin's works, with the impression that after its use for the edition of 1818, the collection had been irrevocably lost. But in fact the papers all lay, for more than seventeen years, in loose bundles "on the top shelf of an old tailor's shop in St. James." They were then rescued by a gentleman who had been a fellow-lodger with Temple

Franklin in the house where these papers were. At different times he offered them to the British Museum, to Lord Palmerston, and to the several ministers who represented the United States in England. When this offer was made to Mr. Abbot Lawrence, he introduced the owner to Mr. Henry Stevens. This gentleman made a slight examination of them, bought them, and afterwards made them a special object of his antiquarian zeal. He spent much time in arranging them in the convenient form in which they now are, — in collating and binding them. He spent more than a thousand pounds in repairing, copying, and binding the papers, and in the additions which he made to them.

According to Mr. Stevens's careful account, there are in this collection two thousand nine hundred and thirty-eight different papers. Of these, about twenty-four hundred and thirty pages have never been printed until now. Eleven hundred and ninety-five had been printed, not always accurately, in Sparks, and five hundred and forty-six in the "Diplomatic Correspondence," of which two hundred and forty-six were also in Sparks. It will thus be seen that a larger part of the collection had never been printed. As has been said, the part of the collection least drawn upon was that which followed the year 1780.

After the invention of the type-writer, Mr. Stevens added greatly to the value of the collection for students, by having type-writer copies made of all the papers. They are thus easily read, and there is no danger of injury in unnecessary reference to the manuscript originals.

Such was the collection which, in 1881, Mr. Stevens offered to the American government. Mr. Blaine, then Secretary of State, instructed Mr. Theodore F. Dwight, the accomplished librarian of the State Department, to examine the collection in London. Mr. Dwight did so, and his report, dated November 30 of that year, covering a statement of the history of the collection, was sent by Mr.

Blaine to Congress, with an earnest recommendation that the papers should be purchased for the nation. This communication was referred to the Joint Committee on the Library, which considered the subject with care, and reported favorably, by their chairman, Hon. George F. Hoar. The papers were bought for $35,000, and the next winter arrived in Washington.

This is not the place for an analysis of the whole of this really invaluable collection of materials for American history. I had an opportunity of examining it, a few weeks after its arrival. I soon satisfied myself that it was impossible, in any single collection, to lay before the world the additional materials which it afforded for our history. My first idea had been that a large collection of the really important papers might be made, on the general plan of the "Diplomatic Correspondence," edited by Dr. Sparks for the government, and published in 1829–30. But it is clear that such a collection would be imperfect in itself, and, to be understood, would require constant reference to other collections, some of them difficult of access. I am quite sure that the method adopted in the book now before the reader is the better method. That is to say, it is better that different editors shall attack, if I may so speak, different parts of the collection, and bring forward for the use of the public such documents, before unpublished, as are of the most value. I undertook therefore, with the full sympathy and confidence of the gentlemen who had the papers in charge, the editing and publishing of those which relate to Franklin's life of nearly nine years in France. I proposed, not simply to reprint the new documents, if I may so call them, of this collection, but also the papers from other collections which would in any way illustrate that critical part of our history, which is so nearly independent of our history at home in the same years.

There are very many such papers, which have never been published in other large collections.

For many years past the American Philosophical Society, of which Franklin was one of the founders, has had a large collection of the letters addressed to him. This collection has been used by Dr. Sparks and by the other American authors who have treated Franklin's life with care. It is of more value than ever, now that in the letter-books of the Stevens Collection we have the drafts of very many of the letters to which these are the replies, or which are written in reply to these. The officers of the Philosophical Society have arranged these letters in chronological order with good indexes. They have with the greatest kindness rendered me every facility in examining them and copying them. It would probably be difficult to persuade the Society to part with a treasure so interesting; but to students of Franklin, it would be a great convenience if the Government could arrange to receive them, on deposit, in the Fire-Proof Library of the State Department, and thus keep, side by side, letters and answers.

Hon. George Bancroft, with that kindness and generosity which have distinguished his life, and won for him the regard as well as the esteem of all younger students, kindly threw open to me the whole of his matchless collection of manuscripts, with permission to make full use of it. I have, of course, availed myself of permission so generous. The formation of this collection has been the joy, as it has been the duty, of his life. It forms a series practically of the same value as the original documents from which, at great expense, it has been copied. It includes indeed, in many instances, original manuscripts, which Mr. Bancroft has purchased from their former owners. If our studies of the Treaty of 1783 prove to have any new value for historians, they are indebted largely for it to Mr. Bancroft's cordial kindness in opening for us his archives. He has, from first to last, given us the advantage of his advice, and ready answer to unnumbered questions.

The grandson and great-grandsons of President Adams

have made it their care to provide, for the manuscripts of what one is tempted to call the "House of Adams," a fireproof library, where that invaluable and unequalled collection of journals, letters, and other manuscripts is preserved. I know of no other collection in the world where the history of a great nation can be so studied in the biography of one family. From John Adams's notes, as his active life begins, in the year 1755, till the year 1866, when the service of his grandson to America came to a fit close in the Treaty of Geneva, here is an unbroken series of letters and papers, bound and arranged and ready for the historian. The courtesy of the Messrs. Adams placed at our disposal all the resources of this collection for the period covered by our work, and the reader will see the use which we have made of them.

The correspondence between America and France often passed through Boston, and Franklin's intimacy with leading men in that city led them to keep up a close correspondence with him, in letters now private and now official. The archives of Massachusetts therefore afford some documents which the reader will find in their places.

Mr. Loring Austin, at my request, put into my hands the very curious diary of his grandfather, the fortunate young man who carried from Boston to France the great news of Burgoyne's surrender.

Dr. Sparks, both before and after the publication of his edition of Franklin's works, made it his duty to collect all the letters of Franklin he could find in private or public collections. His collection of manuscripts contains eleven volumes of Franklin papers, of which he has only printed a part. It contains also parallel collections, foremost among which are copies of Lord Stormont's despatches while he was watching the American commissioners in Paris. Through the kindness of Mrs. Sparks and the directors of the Library of Harvard College, this collection has been open to us, and we have used it freely.

To publish all the new letters from Franklin which the Stevens and Sparks and other collections put in our hands, as a sort of appendix to Dr. Sparks's invaluable volumes, would have placed in the hands of all students the material for history now thrown open to them, if they will visit the several collections we have named. But, as I have said, after full consideration, it seemed to me best to undertake the work of editing these letters more fully, even if I failed to print much of the correspondence. The printed additions made every year to the history of that time must be considered by any one who pretended to edit Franklin's letters. The duty of the editor would thus become so important that, after carefully studying the manuscripts and consulting with gentlemen best informed, I determined not to adopt the form of Dr. Sparks's work, nor to confine myself chiefly to Franklin's own letters and despatches. The plan of the book now in the reader's hand seemed preferable. That is, I determined to examine anew the whole mission of Franklin to France, using as best we could the advantages which so many years had given since the publication of Mr. Parton's and Mr. Bigelow's admirable studies of it, — with the intention of printing all the more important letters of Franklin not published heretofore, and also the most important unpublished letters of his correspondents, which would throw light on the history or on his life in France.

I have not hesitated to reprint in a few instances papers which have been before printed, where we supposed this to be quite necessary for the narrative. But such cases have been very few. Our business has been to tell our story as briefly and as clearly as we could, and to print such illustrations as the new material offered, or as were not of ready access in well-furnished libraries. It will be seen that we have by no means confined ourselves as closely as Dr. Sparks did to Franklin's own writings. Our effort is not to show how he wrote or what he wrote, but to tell the

story of his life as well as we can. Where we have a new and interesting letter from him on a subject of importance, we should be foolish indeed, if we omitted it or abridged it. But next to such letters, as the reader will soon see, letters from other persons, such as this immense mass of correspondence often affords, are more valuable illustrations and narratives of the history than any statement made in our time can be. We have derived great assistance, also, from the wonderful index to the Congressional Documents, completed within the last year under the direction of Mr. Benjamin Perley Poore. Every American historian whose work brings him later than the year 1774 will have to acknowledge similar obligation to this remarkable book. Our indebtedness to it is peculiar; for we have been very desirous not to include in this volume, unless there were pressing necessity, any public document which had been published in the same form elsewhere. With Mr. Poore's "Index," we feel quite sure that whatever is not mentioned there, and is not in one of the printed volumes of private memoirs, has never been printed.

We cannot profess that the new documents suggest any revision of judgment on important matters of history, where a verdict has been rendered before now. But we believe the reader will feel that the questions relating to French neutrality, to the treatment of prisoners, to privateering, and especially those relating to the treaties with France and with England, can be considered with more certainty, now that we have all the important facts involved, as we did not have them until now.

I have spoken thus of "our plans" and "our work" because from the first I have had the co-operation of my son and namesake. Had I not been sure of it I should never have undertaken the work now in the reader's hand. We have examined together the collections which I have described; we have determined together on the plan of the book; we have lived together while we carried it out, and

have had daily conference as to the details. In dividing the subjects for the final selection and composition, we took each the topics which interested him most. But in each chapter each writer has had the benefit of the revision and oversight of the other; so that we are fairly responsible, each of us, for errors and omissions, where they are found. My son has taken the charge of the laborious oversight of the copies made from the originals, and to him the reader is indebted for the accuracy in these copies which I hope has been secured. Our treatment of the spelling in the manuscripts, and of other matters supposed to belong to orthography, will disgust the purists by its freedom. But people of sense who wish to know more about the local color and the method of Franklin's life in France will thank us that we have not rendered their reading difficult, by compelling them to translate bad English or bad French. If an incorrect expression, or one now antiquated, seems to show anything characteristic of the person who wrote, we have retained it. Thus we have printed one or two of Franklin's notes in French, to show how good, and at the same time how bad his French was. We have followed the text of the Marquis de Lafayette's manuscript notes, because it shows how far he succeeded in overcoming the difficulties of the English language. But we know no reason for preserving the bad spelling, or any other error, of some unknown, careless copying clerk, who has long since gone to his own place and rendered his own account of his misdeeds. In a word, we consider it to be our business, in all such affairs, to help and not to perplex the reader.

We find it difficult to name the persons to whose kindness the reader has been indebted for the counsel and contributions which have given to the book some of its best features. First, to Mr. Theodore F. Dwight, whose careful report on the Stevens papers secured them for the nation, and whose administration of the library of the State Department makes it a pleasure to work there, every

American is indebted every day, more than most men know. We and our readers are especially indebted to him. We have to acknowledge the kindness and interest of Mr. Frelinghuysen, who gave full permission to our copyists to work, and of Mr. Bayard, who continued that permission.

We have been indebted for original manuscripts to Mr. Dupont de Nemours, the grandson of Franklin's friend; to Hon. Mellen Chamberlain; to Mr. Loring Austin, who placed in our hands the curious manuscript journal of his grandfather. Mr. B. F. Stevens, who is diligently collecting in the archives of England and France such a series of materials as may one day make it possible for Americans to study their own history without going to Europe, has kindly attended to every inquiry with which we have burdened him. In Paris we have also had the sympathy and help of Mr. W. B. Greene, M. T. Pingard, and M. G. A. Barringer.

And without attempting to name all who have cordially helped forward our undertaking, we will, on behalf of our readers, as for ourselves, thank Hon. John Bigelow, Hon. George F. Hoar, Mr. Justin Winsor, Hon. John Jay, Hon. Richard Bache, Mrs. E. D. Gillespie, Mr. Henry Phillips, Jr., Mr. Kiernan, Mr. C. H. Hildeburn, Mr. W. H. Knapp, all the officials of the Massachusetts Archive Rooms, of the American Philosophical Society, the Boston Public Library, and the Fellowes Athenæum, of the Harvard College Library, and of the Cornell Library.

In the choice of portraits of Franklin to accompany this study of his life in France, the only difficulty or embarrassment is that of riches. Franklin did not dislike to sit for his picture. On the other hand, also, as the reader of this book knows, the French people and their artists were determined to have his picture, and to have it in various

forms. A complete collection of the various portraits of him made public while he was in France would include almost two hundred different pictures; perhaps would pass that number. Many of these are in some sort familiar to American readers, having been reproduced by Dr. Sparks, Mr. Parton, or Mr. Bigelow, with their widely read biographies. In our selection, we have preferred not to reproduce these pictures, for precisely the reason that they are so well known. We add four more, each in its way characteristic, and all of them of such merit that they must give a very accurate idea of Franklin's appearance at this period of his life.

The steel engraving by Mr. Wilcox is an admirable reproduction of a very characteristic portrait ascribed to Van Loo. This portrait was originally engraved by Alix, a French engraver of some reputation, who died late in the century. We have not been able to fix with precision the date when his print first appeared. There is a certain mystery about this picture, because a painting almost precisely similar to it exists in the Historical Library in the city of Philadelphia, which is known to be painted by Charles Peale. We venture the suggestion that Peale copied, either from the original by Van Loo, or from one of Alix's prints. If the painting were made by Van Loo from Franklin, the date is as early as Franklin's second visit to Paris in 1769.

The full length picture is from a print published in Paris, from a drawing by Louis C. de Carmontelle. The original print has the following French version of Turgot's epigram.

"On l'a vu désarmer les Tirans et les Dieux."

The print beneath which is the representation of a cloud and kite with a flash of lightning is from a portrait, probably the earliest in point of time. It corresponds nearly to the time of Franklin's first visit in France, and was originally engraved by Chapman, an English engraver.

The profile picture, representing him in his favorite fur cap, is from an interesting medallion in terra cotta by Jean Baptiste Nini, a sculptor in this line of considerable repute in that time. It was taken within the first year after Franklin's arrival in France as a diplomatist. In the year 1885 a large store of these medallions was found in a warehouse in Bordeaux, as fresh as on the day when they were first baked. We are indebted to the kindness of a friend at that place, for the medal which has been copied for our readers.

Mr. Richard S. Greenough, the celebrated sculptor, tells me that he thinks Franklin's fondness for fur in his pictures, was due to his supposing that fur was used as a professional badge by the early printers.

EDWARD E. HALE.

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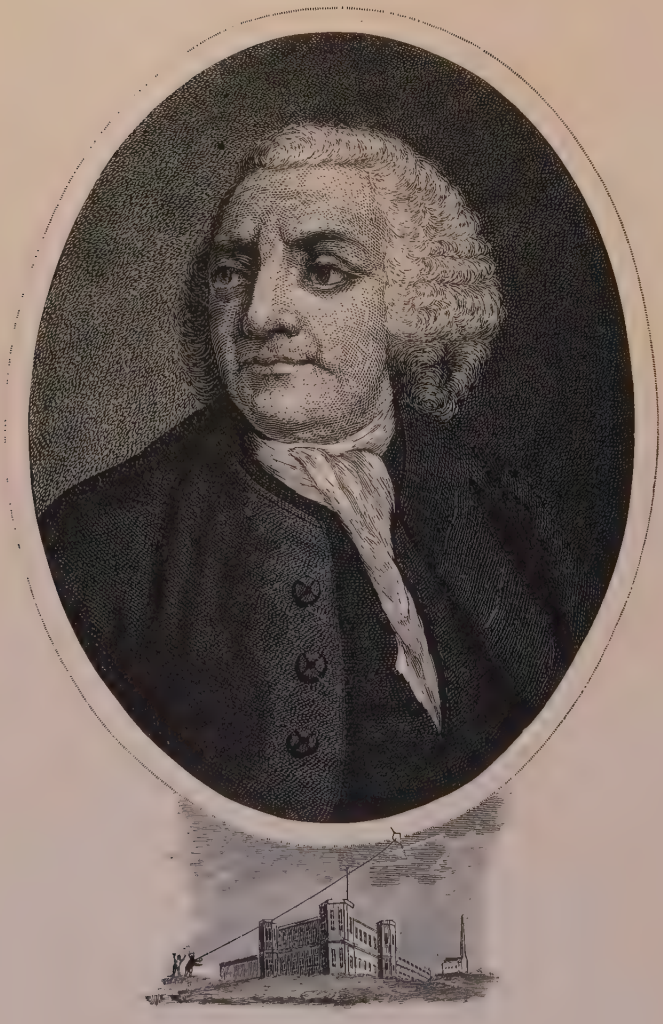


BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL.D.

(From a Print by CHAPMAN.)

FRANKLIN IN FRANCE.

CHAPTER I.

1767–1769.

THE Declaration of Independence made the United States a nation. It was a nation which had power to make war or peace, and to contract alliances.

The Continental Congress, which by misfortune was at once the executive and the legislature of this nation, addressed itself immediately to this business of making alliance with any European power which could aid it against England. By the agency of a secret committee, of which Benjamin Franklin was the most important member, it had opened correspondence with many persons in Europe. Among these was Dr. Arthur Lee, — a Virginian who had been made a Doctor of Medicine by the University of Edinburgh, had afterwards studied law, and was at the time of the outbreak of hostilities agent in London for Massachusetts. The secret committee had also recommended that Silas Deane should be sent to France, to try if it were possible to obtain assistance for the colonies. Almost immediately after the Declaration of Independence, Congress named these two, with Franklin, as its commissioners in Europe for making such alliances as might be possible. Congress gave these commissioners full powers for contracting treaties with France and Spain.

It was the appointment of Franklin which gave to this Commission its remarkable success. He was already known in Paris, and for many reasons was a favorite there. Where Lee and Deane lived as strangers, Franklin lived among intimate personal friends. He had a good working knowledge of the French language, which he had studied as early as the year 1733, although he did not yet speak it with ease. He had made two visits in Paris before this time, — one in the year 1767, and one in 1769. These two visits have generally been passed lightly over by his biographers, and there is perhaps a certain reticence with regard to them in his own correspondence. But they are so important a part of his life, and they led so directly to his acquisition of the social position which he held in his long residence there, that they must not be neglected here.

The first intimation which now exists in his correspondence of any intention of going to France is his mention of an interview with Durand, who was at that time acting *ad interim* as the French minister in London. Franklin says that Durand, who was left as Minister Plenipotentiary, had treated him with great civility, had made him visits, invited him to dine, "and so forth."

The reader will observe that this was in the year 1767, just after Chatham's ministry had gone out and Grafton's had come in. Townshend's new taxes on tea, glass, painter's colors, and paper were at this very time voted in Parliament. Choiseul was in power in France, and had already, on April 22, ordered De Kalb to go to America to ascertain the wants of the colonies, the strength of their purpose to withdraw from the British government; their resources in troops, citadels, and intrenched posts; their projects of revolt, and their chiefs.

It is at this time that Durand visits Franklin frequently,

invites him to dinner, and provides for his cordial welcome in Paris. "I fancy," says Franklin, speaking of these invitations, "that intriguing nation would like very well to meddle on occasion, and blow up the coals between Britain and her colonies; but I hope we shall give them no opportunity." Again, "Durand has given me letters of recommendation to the Lord knows who. I am told I shall meet with great respect there; but winds change, and perhaps it will be full as well if I do not. We shall be gone six weeks. I have a little private commission to transact, of which more another time."

This "private commission" was the arrangement for the translation of his own works into French. This reference to it, in a letter to William Franklin, is the only allusion which slips through in Franklin's own writings to the fact that there was a public commission also.

His companion in this journey was Sir John Pringle, a distinguished and interesting man of science, well known through Europe, who became, not long after, the President of the Royal Society. Franklin calls him "my steady good friend, Sir John Pringle." The year before, Franklin and Sir John Pringle had travelled together very pleasantly in the Netherlands and in Germany. In that year Dr. Pringle had been made a baronet in recognition of his scientific attainments.

He was chosen President of the Royal Society in 1772, and remained in that post till 1778, when he left it for an odd reason, which, as it happens, connects with Franklin's life. George III., in the heat of his animosity against the Americans, had determined that the lightning conductors on Kew Palace should have blunt knobs instead of sharp points. Franklin, the inventor of conductors, had directed that the points should be sharp, so that an overcharge of electricity might be dispersed silently and

without explosion. As we shall have occasion to see, the question of sharp and blunt conductors became a court question, the courtiers siding with the King, and their opponents with Franklin. The King asked Sir John Pringle to take his side, and give him an opinion in favor of the knobs. To which Pringle replied by hinting that the laws of nature were not changeable at royal pleasure. It was then intimated to him by the King's authority that a President of the *Royal* Society entertaining such an opinion ought to resign, and he resigned accordingly.[1]

This Sir John Pringle is Franklin's travelling companion in his six weeks' visit in Paris. They leave London on the 28th August[2] and travel post to Dover. The journey is described in amusing detail, in a chatty letter from Franklin to his bright friend, Miss Stevenson, which is the only letter preserved, written while he was in France. Modern travellers may be interested to know that he tells Miss Stevenson that it cost him fifty guineas to come into a position where he could write to her the French news. They travelled post in France, as they had done in England.[3]

[1] A well-known epigram of the time preserves the memory of this ridiculous controversy, which would be otherwise forgotten : —

"While you, great George, for safety hunt,
And sharp conductors change for blunt,
The nation 's out of joint.
Franklin a wiser course pursues,
And all your thunder fearless views,
By keeping to the point."

[2] Not Aug. 8, as in a misprinted letter to William Franklin.

[3] We quote here an entry in manuscript account-book : —

Sept. 3, 1767.

Cash Dr to Brown & Collinson. My dft in fav of Panchaud for money took up at Paris for expenses 32.7.2

Oct. 3, 1767.

Cash Dr to Smith, Wright, & Gray for my dft on them in fav of Jere Lambert, rcd of him at Paris 30.0.0

Franklin's reputation had gone before him. His electrical experiments had been carefully studied and repeated. Even before he drew the lightning from the skies with the aid of his celebrated kite, the Abbé D'Alibard had done so, in a critical experiment, with an iron rod, at Marly, just outside of Paris. This was a month before Franklin's experiment with the kite at Philadelphia. But Franklin had not heard of it when he tried his in Philadelphia on the fifteenth day of June, 1752.

M. D'Alibard subsequently repeated the experiment in the presence of Louis XV., who gave him a pension for life, in recognition of a service so interesting. With entire frankness, D'Alibard always recognized the fact that he conducted the experiment in accordance with Franklin's direction, and that the credit of the great discovery was his. As the reader will see, he and Franklin maintained intimate relations; they frequently corresponded with each other. He published in the year 1752 a "Theory of Electricity," and he attained some distinction as a botanist, being, indeed, the first Frenchman to introduce the system and nomenclature of Linnæus.

It would seem that none of these experimenters understood the great danger of the experiment. Louis XV. was no coward in battle, but he would hardly have exposed himself, for mere scientific curiosity, to the imminent danger of being killed by lightning, had he known how real that danger was. It may be doubted if the experiment has ever been repeated since the year 1753, when Richman, a Professor in Russia, was instantly killed by an electric spark from the rod which he was using.

But Franklin's welcome in France was not due simply to his fame as an electrician. His journey had its political significance. Durand, as the reader has seen, furnished Franklin with letters to "the Lord knows who." He

undoubtedly apprised his French friends of the importance of conciliating the man who represented at this moment the American colonies in England, in a mission much more distinguished than the business "agents" of the several provinces had ever attained. Franklin himself was master of that great rule [1] — "If you want your secret kept, keep it." He managed so discreetly that while the English journals mentioned the fact that Sir John Pringle had gone to France, they do not seem to have said that Franklin went with him. In writing to his own son in New Jersey, he says, cautiously, "Communicate nothing of this letter but privately to our friend Galloway;" and it may be doubted whether he wrote from Paris to any one in America.

What contributed most of all, as it proved, to the warmth of his welcome, was the interest taken in his writings on politics, or what we should call social economy. At this moment, indeed, the absorbing passion in France was for what they called political and rural economy. In the midst of the rigmarole and gossip of that immense body of correspondence which Grimm, Diderot, and others sent, twice a month, to different princes and noblemen of Europe, there comes in, fortunately for us, at the date of the 1st October, in this very year 1767, a curious essay on this passion. After showing at some length that France always has some "object of predilection" the writer says, "At the present moment, political and rural economy, agriculture, the principles of government, are the object of this national passion."

A society had been formed in Paris which brought together political economists and agriculturalists. "The two pillars of this society are the old Doctor Quesnay and

[1] Edward Everett's rule.

the Marquis of Mirabeau, known as the *Friend of Men*, from one of his own books."

This is the account given in Grimm. The letter goes on to say that a young man named Dupont, and the Abbé Baudeau are the principal apostles of the school. This M. Dupont de Nemours was, through his life, Franklin's intimate friend, and the Abbe Baudeau appears again and again in the correspondence. He visited Franklin in 1772.

Dupont, who considered himself as formed by Quesnay and Turgot, offended the Court and was exiled from Paris to the Gatinais. Here he occupied himself with writing poetry, and agriculture. In 1783 he was recalled to Court by Vergennes, and we shall meet him again in the negotiations of the treaty of peace. He was in the Constituent Assembly in 1789, and was imprisoned after the fall of the Girondists. In 1795 he came to the United States, where his sons had come before him, probably by Franklin's advice. M. Dupont was, in fact, threatened with exile by the ruling powers in France, who did not find him sufficiently extravagant. To this emigration this country owes the family of Duponts, who have distinguished themselves here in war and in peace. The Dupont powder of the sportsman, and of the army and navy service, is made at the establishment which still bears the name of Dupont de Nemours, Franklin's friend.[1]

The chiefs of the "Economists" tried to make a sect of their adherents, with its ritual, its jargon, and its mysteries. So Grimm says, or his coadjutor. "Quesnay calls himself the master, the others call themselves the elders. Rural economy is called 'the Science' *par excellence.* They meet every Tuesday at Monsieur de Mirabeau's.

[1] The reader is indebted to the present representative of the family for some letters of Franklin never before published.

They begin with a good dinner, then they labor; they chop and dig and drain; they do not leave an inch of ground in France. And when they have thus labored all day in a charming saloon, cool in summer, and well warmed in winter, they part in the evening, well contented, and with the happy satisfaction that they have made the kingdom more flourishing."

MIRABEAU.

This society, or sect, published "The Ephemerides of a Citizen," of which Dupont was the editor. It continued several years. Their views, based on the theory that the farmer is the only producer in society, are well stated in "Physiocratie," a book by Dupont.

Grimm was so provoked with them that he says he should be glad some fine day to take Monsieur de Mirabeau, "with all his Tuesday," and their mattocks, pickaxes, and carts, and carry them to the *Landes* de Bordeaux, or some other ungrateful soil, that they might learn the business of draining with other tools than tongues or pens.

He says they make a mystical science and a divine institution of agriculture, of which they are the theologians; that Monsieur de Mirabeau's "Tuesday" would be the Sorbonne of the laboring man, and that this Sorbonne, as much as the other, would oppose what he calls "Philosophy." And Grimm closes his rather bitter account of them by a prayer to the sovereign Distributor of all light, that they might learn to read and talk intelligently, and to know what they are talking about.

Very active among these people was James Barbeu-Dubourg, who became Franklin's intimate friend and the

French editor of his works. He addresses Franklin as "My master." He was at this time fifty-seven years old. In early life he studied languages, and he knew Greek and Hebrew well. At this time he was an excellent English scholar. In 1761 he had published a Gazette of Medicine; in 1767 he published the "Botaniste Française," in two volumes.[1] In his youth Dubourg was connected with Lord Bolingbroke. He translated his "Letters on History," published 1752. In his old age he was more closely connected with Franklin, and dedicated to him his "Petit Code de la Raison Humaine."[2]

The Franklin correspondence contains many letters from Dubourg, beginning with 1767 and continuing until his death in 1779. We shall meet him as a party in Deane's negotiations with Beaumarchais, and again in his somewhat unfortunate speculations in tobacco.

With all this sect of "Economists" Franklin became well acquainted. The Marquis de Mirabeau seems to have been away when he left, but in a letter from Dupont, he speaks of Mirabeau, who sends a message to Franklin, expressing his regret that they had not met. Nor did Franklin see Dupont personally on the first visit, but Dupont writes to say that Dr. Quesnay had given him Franklin's messages. "I am very much touched by your goodness, now that I learn from Dr. Quesnay that you had

[1] "It is one of the most agreeable elementary books in the language," says the "Universal Biography." He undertook to make a printed collection of illustrations of the Mushroom family, from drawings by Mlle. Biheron, and gave the name of this skilful artist to one of the genera. This book brought him into controversy with Adamson, who was the censor of it. It is much superior to that of D'Alibard, and one of the best on plants in the neighborhood of Paris.

[2] The first edition of this was published in 1774, the second in 1782, at Franklin's imprimerie at Passy, the third in 1789. This last edition is the most complete; that of 1782 is the most rare; almost all the copies were sent to America.

designed to see me, and inform yourself regarding me in your late sojourn in Paris."

Some of the papers of Franklin which are best known come to us through these gentlemen. Thus the letter on "Swimming," so often cited, is a translation from a letter to Dubourg, which Dubourg printed in French in his second volume. In a letter to D'Alibard, Franklin alludes to Priestley's "History of Electricity," which he had sent to the Frenchman. He says very handsomely: "Philosophy is already indebted to you as being the first of mankind that had the courage to attempt drawing lightning from the clouds to be subject to your experiments." D'Alibard himself, with equal courtesy, in describing his own experiment, had said: "I have obtained complete satisfaction in following the road which Monsieur Franklin has laid down for us."

Of this first visit to France, as has been already said, Franklin seems to have written to no one in America, excepting his son, and he even cautions him against letting any one know that he was there. To Miss Stevenson he wrote the amusing letter which has been cited, describing the travel in France, the customs of dress, and his own presentation at Court. This was on Sunday, the ninth day of September; Franklin and Pringle were both presented. This presentation was probably due to the suggestion of Durand, which has been alluded to. Franklin says, "The King spoke to both of us very graciously and very cheerfully. He is a handsome man, has a very lively look, and appears younger than he is." It was Louis XV., and he was, in fact, fifty-nine years old, — two years younger than Franklin himself. In the afternoon of the same day the two travellers were at the Grand Couvert, where the royal family supped in public. The King's and Queen's chairs were so far from each other

that another chair might have been introduced between them. As Franklin and his companion looked upon this spectacle, an officer of the Court was sent for them, and "placed Sir John so as to stand between the Queen and Madame Victoire." The King took some notice of Franklin also. "That is saying enough; for I would not have you think me so much pleased with this King and Queen as to have a whit less regard than I used to have for ours. No Frenchman shall go beyond me in thinking my own King and Queen the very best in the world, and the most amiable." So loyal was Franklin then to that king who has since been called a brummagem Louis XIV. He says himself that the Scripture proverb that diligent men should stand before kings had been fulfilled in his case; that he had stood before George II. and George III. Louis XV. was the third of the series, Christian VII. was the fourth, and Louis XVI. the fifth.

It is not beneath the dignity of history to say that in this one letter from Paris, Franklin mentions the important fact that in playing cards quadrille is out of fashion, and English whist all the mode at Paris and at the Court. Had any Daniel of that day been wise enough, and at the same time brave enough, he would have told the King what this omen signified. For in quadrille, as in ombre, better known to us through "The Rape of the Lock," the ace of spades, called "spadille," is always the highest card, whatever may be the trump suit. He is an absolute monarch, as at the head of the soldier class. Let the reader remember that spades are so called from the Italian 'spada," and that they represent the soldier class in society. The hearts, which on the Spanish cards are chalices, represent the clergy, the diamonds represent the bourgeois, while the clubs are the weapons of the rustics. When, therefore, the fashion of the Court changed so far

that the ace of spades could not always take the ace of clubs, of hearts, or of diamonds,[1] the King of France should have known that even the chief of the noblemen was no longer supreme above the demands of clergy, merchants, and people. It was "English" whist which found its way into the French Court, and it came as an omen of constitutional government. In the manufacture of cards, the ace of spades generally maintains even to this day the distinction which it bore in the days of absolute monarchy.

On their return from this visit, contrary winds detained Franklin and his friend a week in Calais, a week which they would gladly have spent in Paris. They arrived in London again on the 8th of October. From that time there begin to appear in his voluminous manuscript correspondence the letters of the friends he had formed in Paris. We shall meet many of these friends again when he appears there as a negotiator.

He had failed, as has been said, to see Dupont. Dupont writes to express his regret that they did not meet. He goes on: "I had already known you as savant, geometer, naturalist, — as the man whom Nature permitted to unveil her secrets. But now, my friend, Dr. Barbeu Du Bourg has been kind enough to send me many of your writings relative to the affairs of your Country. I have taken the liberty to translate some of them" (probably in the "Ephemerides of a Citizen"). "At every page I find the philosophical citizen, bringing his genius to bear for the happiness of his brothers and the dearest interests of humanity. These writings have made me regret more than ever that I did not meet you while you were in Paris. If, to our good fortune, you shall come here again,

[1] Diamonds, had any one remembered it, represent the square blocks of pavement in burghs, and are thus appropriate for "city-zens." They come to the front again when "city-zens" use them for barricades.

promise me, I beg you, to repair my loss as completely as may be possible." He sends to Franklin two books, — one a collection of Dr. Quesnay's writings, and the other his own treatise, "Physiocratie," which is a brief resumé of Dr. Quesnay's principles. "It is," he says, "clear that in the development of all the rights of man, we are to find the base of the principle of a government always prosperous, — at once useful and safe for the nation governed, and advantageous for neighboring countries, who will profit by its love of peace and liberty, in the freedom of its commerce, and the distribution of the multiplied products of its agriculture."

To this letter Franklin makes the following reply. It is interesting as showing the interest he took in the speculations of the "Tuesday," and his close relation to the founders of the School.

London, July 28th, 1768.

I received your obliging letter of the 10th May, with the most acceptable present of your Physiocratie, which I have read with great Pleasure, and received from it a great deal of Instruction. There is such a Freedom from local and national Prejudices and Partialities, so much Benevolence to Mankind in general, so much Goodness mixt with the Wisdom, in the Principles of your new Philosophy, that I am perfectly charmed with them, and wish I could have stayed in France for some time, to have studied in your School, that I might by conversing with its Founders have made myself quite a Master of that Philosophy. . . . I had, before I went into your Country, seen some Letters of yours to Dr. Templeman,[1] that gave me a high Opinion of the Doctrines you are

[1] An English physician, of great erudition, a man of science. He was at one time keeper of the reading-room of the British Museum.

engaged in cultivating, and of your personal Talents and Abilities, which made me greatly desirous of seeing you. Since I had not that good Fortune the next best thing is the Advantage you are so good as to offer me of your Correspondence, which I shall ever highly value, and endeavor to cultivate with all the Diligence I am capable of.

I am sorry to find, that that Wisdom which sees the Welfare of the Parts in the Prosperity of the Whole seems yet not to be Known in this Country. . . . We are so far from conceiving that what is best for Mankind, or even for Europe, in general, may be best for us, that we are ever studying to establish and extend a separate Interest of Brittain, to the Prejudice of even Ireland and our own Colonies! . . . It is from your Philosophy only that the Maxims of a contrary and more happy Conduct are to be drawn, which I therefore sincerely wish may grow and increase till it becomes the governing Philosophy of the human Species, as it must be that of superior beings in better Worlds. I take the Liberty of sending you a little Fragment that has some Tincture of it, which, on that account, I hope may be acceptable.

Be so good as to present my sincere Respects to that venerable Apostle Dr. Quesnay, and to the illustrious Ami des Hommes (of whose Civilities to me at Paris I retain a grateful Remembrance) and believe me to be, with real and very great Esteem, Sir,

Your obliged and most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

Early in 1768 Dr. Priestley's "History of Electricity" was published. On the 31st of January, Franklin sent a copy to the Abbé D'Alibard, in Paris, with a letter in which occurs the compliment to him which has been cited.

He says, "The time I spent in Paris, in the inspiring conversation and agreeable society of so many ingenious and learned men, seems now like a pleasing dream, from which I was only to be awakened by finding myself at London." In acknowledging this letter and the book, D'Alibard writes a letter, in which we find the first intimation of a second visit to Paris. "Do you not remember, sir, that you gave us reason to hope that in May you would return to Paris, and pass some months on your way to Italy. All your friends here, all, at least, whom I know, often ask me if I have received any news from you, and if you will keep your word. Pray let me know how I shall reply. Last year you only put in an appearance in Paris; you came too late, and your sojourn was too short to procure the pleasure we wish you to enjoy. Pray make us some recompense for this privation."

The correspondence with Dubourg led, as has been said, to the arrangement by which this gentleman supervised the translation into French of Franklin's works. His name appears on the titlepage as the only translator. We shall meet him often again. He is the person to whom Franklin introduced Silas Deane in 1776, and whose prejudice against Beaumarchais for a time cooled Franklin's interest in that agent of the French ministry. Dubourg had translated Dickinson's "Letters of a Pennsylvania Farmer," probably at Franklin's suggestion; for, as will be seen, two of Franklin's papers were appended to it.

The year 1768 passed, however, without Franklin's carrying out his wish to revisit the Continent. On the 27th of February, 1769, Bertier[1] writes: "To crown your work, you should again make a journey to France. It is your country as much as England is. You would be here in

[1] Joseph Etienne Bertier, born 1710, died 1783; an intimate friend of J. J. Rousseau, a "fanatic for science," author of "Letters on Electricity."

the midst of Franklinists, a father in his own country, where the country is inhabited by his children. I was a Franklinist without knowing it; now that I do know it, I shall not fail to name the founder of my sect."

Accordingly, in July, 1769,[1] Franklin left London for Paris again. Brief as is the account which he gives of the first expedition, his letters give even less of this. In a letter to Cooper, of Boston, he says: "I have just returned from France, where I found our dispute much attended to, several of our pamphlets being translated and printed there, among others my 'Examination' and the 'Farmer's Letters,' with two of my pieces annexed, of which last I send you a copy. In short, all Europe, except Britain, appears to be on our side of the question."

The silence which he maintains regarding it even suggests that he had some political plans in Paris, beside the matters of personal business and amusement which engaged him. We learn from the correspondence afterwards that he did arrange for the translation of some of his more important works into French, and their publication in Paris. After this time Dubourg's letters refer directly to the business of translation and publication. The translation itself had been confided to Lesqui, who is called a Premonstrant,[2] of whose delays and, indeed, ill success generally, Dubourg complains. But Dubourg was a competent editor and reviser, and Franklin's reputation in France was, in good measure, due to his care and skill. Of his own work he says, "I have considerably increased my little Bible of Humanity, but they refuse me the appro-

[1] From a Manuscript Account Book: —

Cash Dr to Brown & Collinson.

My draft in favr of Rougemont rec'd of him at Paris.

[2] This means that he belonged to the Premonstrant order of clergy, — an order bound to "shew the way, 'premonstrare.'"

bation necessary for printing it. I am very sorry for this, for I like it better than I did the first time." This is the "Petit Code," of which one edition was afterwards issued from Franklin's own press. And he refers his publishing difficulties to the restrictions "on the press in this good country, where they wish to have everything go well, and where they are afraid even of the shadow of evil."

Some of Dubourg's difficulties of revision are amusing. He cannot find the word "orreries" in his dictionary. Is it the same as "cadrans"? "What do 'surf' and 'spray' mean?" "I do not find 'jostled,' which embarrasses me less."

The second visit to Paris occupied Franklin for the last weeks of July and the first three weeks of August, 1769. On the 1st of September we find him in England again, having made, in the interim, his arrangements for the translation of his larger works, and bringing with him, probably, some copies of "Dickinson's Letters." Careful readers may be glad to know that he took forty guineas with him for this journey, beside what he drew in Paris. This little detail of a traveller's expenses appears from the note of his bankers, the Quaker house of Smith, Wright, & Gray.

Among the friends whom he made in Paris was Mlle. Biheron, the artist whose anatomical preparations in wax were the first important manufactures in that line. She crossed once and again to London, and seems to have seen Franklin intimately. Her letters appear in the correspondence with him, and she occasionally carries letters or messages as she comes and goes. It would seem that she lived in the house of Mrs. Stevenson, in Craven Street, where Franklin so long made his home.

In one of the last letters of this early series, Dubourg sends the "compliments of Dupont and the Marquis of

Mirabeau," the pillar and apostle, according to the Grimm Memoirs, of the School of Economists.

A second letter from Franklin to Dupont shows how close was his intimacy with the Economists.

LONDON, October 2nd, 1770.

DEAR SIR, — I received with great Pleasure the Assurance of your kind Remembrance of me, and the Continuance of your Goodwill towards me, in your Letter by M. le Comte Chreptowitz. . . . I should have been happy to have rendered him every Civility and Mark of Respect in my Power (as the friend of those I so much Respect and Honor) if he had given me the opportunity. But he did not let me see him.

Accept my sincere Acknowledgements and Thanks for the valuable Present you made me of your excellent Work on the Commerce of the India Company, which I have perused with much Pleasure and Instruction. It bears throughout the Stamp of your Masterly Hand, in Method, Perspicuity, and Force of Argument. The honorable Mention you have made in it of your Friend is extremely obliging. I was already too much in your Debt for Favours of that kind.

I purpose returning to America in the ensuing Summer, if our Disputes should be adjusted, as I hope they will be in the next session of Parliament. Would to God I could take with me Messrs. Du Pont, Du Bourg, and some other French Friends with their good Ladies! I might then, by mixing them with my Friends in Philadelphia, form a little happy Society that would prevent my ever wishing again to visit Europe.

With great and sincere Esteem and Respect, I am, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

The intimacy thus formed between Franklin and the Economists proved of the greatest importance afterwards. It is interesting to observe that Adam Smith was but a few months before him in forming the same acquaintance, to which, indeed, the English-speaking world owes the "Wealth of Nations." Smith had been residing in Toulouse, with the young Duke of Buccleuch, to whom he was tutor. They had then taken a journey in Italy, and returned to Paris at Christmas, 1765. Here they remained for ten months. Hume introduced them to Turgot, Quesnay, Necker, D'Alembert, Helvetius, and Marmontel. For Quesnay he had such regard that he intended to dedicate to him the "Wealth of Nations," and would have done so but for Quesnay's death in 1774. "He was a man," says Mr. Smith, "of the greatest modesty and simplicity, and his system of political economy, with all its imperfections, the nearest approximation to the truth that has yet been published on that important subject."

As a complement to this remark of Smith's, it is amusing to note that M. Dupont says of Turgot's "Reflections on the Formation of Riches," that "all which is true in the estimable book of Adam Smith, which is so hard to read, may be found in this little treatise, and all which Adam Smith adds to it fails in exactitude, and even in foundation."

With all the founders of the Economic school, from whose work, nine years after, the "Wealth of Nations" was to be born, Franklin had formed intimate personal relations in 1767.

CHAPTER II.

FRANCE, AND THE TREATY OF 1763.

WHEN Franklin landed in France, in the year 1776, to win Louis XVI. to an alliance with the United States of America, he found a country which, although not at that time at war with Great Britain, saw in the island power, as she had for many centuries before, an hereditary and most bitter enemy. That France and England should be thus forever at swords' drawn was the effect of many causes, the chief of which occur to every one. The Norman Invasion, the claims of the Edwards and their successors to the kingdom of France, the religious troubles rising from the Protestant Revolution, and afterwards, the ambition of Louis XIV. were among the more important of the causes which had kept these two countries almost constantly embroiled with each other.

From the time when James II. left England and William III. combined the Triple Alliance against Louis XIV. down to the moment when, through the aid of Franklin, peace was reached in 1783 between England, France, and America, the ancient enemies were almost constantly engaged in hostile temper. Indeed, between 1688 and 1783, very nearly half the time was spent in a fierce though intermittent war, in which the treaties concluded at Ryswick, at Utrecht, at Aix-la-Chapelle, and at Paris seem to stand only as truces, to mark breathing-spaces when the exhausted combatants fell back, perforce, to gain new strength and fresh breath for another attack.

There was one reason during the eighteenth century which opposed France to England which had not existed in the centuries before. It was, to a certain extent, connected with that cause which Franklin came to Paris to represent. The colonial supremacy of the world had, for some time, been at stake, and the two foremost nations of Europe had fought the question through.

The Discovery of America had given to Spain and Portugal an advantage over the other nations of Europe which those two nations were not slow to improve. And that these two Christian powers should not come into hostile contact, the world was divided between them by the beneficent Holy Father. Through the sixteenth century, Spain and Portugal were the foremost commercial powers in Europe. Spain drew exhaustless revenues from Peru, from Mexico, and from the West Indies, while the East Indies and Brazil enriched her smaller co-partner in the ownership of God's earth. England possessed not a single town outside her own shores, save Calais, and France was far too much distracted by quarrels of Catholic and Huguenot within her borders to turn her attention to other worlds. But, by the beginning of the eighteenth century all this was changed. Spain and Portugal still held the Pope's Bull. But the other powers of Europe had begun to participate in the great work of colonization. The history of the settlements of England in 1700 is familiar to everybody. The twelve colonies in America, together with some in the West India Islands, showed her power in the New World, while the Carnatic and the Ganges began to be dotted with the trading-posts whereby she had asserted her supremacy over an older civilization. And France, some years before England, had set her foothold permanently upon the continent of America. The settlers of the little town of Port Royal in Acadia were

whiling away the winter months by mimic ceremonies and light hearted shows some years before Jamestown was in being. Soon the Jesuits were infected with enthusiasm for American conquests. Their missions were pushed out to Lake Huron, and their hardy missionaries were to be seen even among the Iroquois in New York and the Ottawas at Machillimakinac. The next step was the discovery of the Mississippi, which set a stream of French fur traders and *coureurs des bois* into the broad West of America to follow the lead of the brilliant and indomitable La Salle. And, just before the eighteenth century dawned, Bienville laid out the old French town at New Orleans. France claimed all west of the Mississippi, and all north and west of the Ohio and the Alleghanies. It was the lion's share of America. In 1700, America was, on the map, far more French than English. The latter had twelve colonies cooped in by the Alleghany Mountains and the Atlantic, restrained at the Kennebec by the French and Indians, and at the Altamaha by the Spanish settlements of Florida. But France had open to her the whole basin of the St. Lawrence, the Great Lakes, and the Mississippi, — stretching away to the Rocky Mountains, with a probable access to the Pacific, — and held the keys to this valley at Quebec and New Orleans.

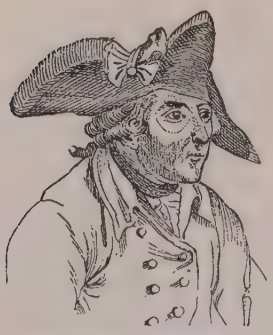
In the West Indies, too, French colonization was becoming active. Trade with the islands flourished enormously. The French trade began to drive the English and Spanish from the market. It is said that the French half of San Domingo (infinitely more prosperous than the Spanish half) was by itself alone equal in value to all the English West Indies. Martinique and Guadeloupe were overflowing with all sorts of wealth. In the East Indies, also, France was at work. In that part of the world she was for some years the chief commercial power; the Portuguese

and the Dutch were declining, the English were still weak. In the Isle of France was La Bourdonnais. In the Carnatic was Dupleix. These two men were doing great things for France in India, and could their magnificent schemes have come to a successful end, India might to-day be French rather than English.

"A splendid present, an alarming future," says Martin, of the situation. The two hereditary enemies shared the commercial supremacy of the world, the Dutch being hardly and grudgingly admitted to a part. But neither France nor England was of the temper to allow the other to advance at a dangerous rate. The wars of the eighteenth century, as far as we can note their results to-day, were colonial wars, undertaken for colonial supremacy, and having that supremacy for their reward. When Franklin appeared at Paris, France had fought her rival through four ruinous wars, and the terms upon which the combatants had last sheathed their swords, had not been such that France, the beaten party, felt content to lie quiet.

The Peace of Paris in 1763 had ended the most disastrous of these struggles with her hereditary foe in which she had for many a century been engaged. Thanks to complications following certain disagreements between Frederick the Great and Maria Theresa, thanks also to the whims of the Pompadour and the ambitions of her favorites, the rulers of Europe let slip the dogs of war to range for seven long years up and down the length of this world and over the breadth of two hemispheres. The years between 1756 and 1763 were marked by some of the most doleful contests by which the world has ever been vexed. In Europe Frederick himself matched his military stratagem and his never-failing resolution against the overwhelming numbers of Russia and Austria, while

England and Hanover engaged successfully the marshals of Louis XV. In America, over the great part of the Continent, from the Ohio to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Frenchmen and Indian were arrayed against British[1] regulars, provincials, and the Iroquois; and, following on Louisburg, Ticonderoga, Duquesne, and Quebec stand as reminders of that struggle which for years sounded on the ears of our forefathers. And not only on our own far-away land did European quarrels bring disaster and suffering. Even in the Antipodes the schemes of the Prussian King and the intrigues of the Parisian Court fanned into sudden flame the innumerable smoulderings of intrigue and plotting by French or English in the Carnatic. They offered opportunity, not in vain, in which Clive made for himself an undying name, and wealth which seemed unending, over the bodies of La Bourdonnais and Dupleix. At the same time he laid for England the foundations of a government over the semi-barbaric tribes of Hindostan. On the shores of Africa as well, and in the West Indies, the English and French arms sought each other. Spain, too, became involved in the general struggle. The far-



FREDERICK OF PRUSSIA.

[1] The use of this word, universal in the American histories of the Revolution, is ridiculed sometimes in England as a provincialism. But it was universal in the English literature of the time. It came in with the union with Scotland, and the Scotch writers were numerous enough and efficient enough to keep it in constant demand whenever both parts of the kingdom were spoken of. Even Dr. Johnson constantly speaks of Britain. With the passage of a generation the larger part of the island gained its old name in English literature.

reaching schemes of Pitt struck at her Indian possessions East and West, and the loss of the Havana and of the Philippines was the price she might have paid for declaring war against the chief maritime power of Europe. Not only on land, but at sea as well, did these great naval powers array their strength against each other, and match their fleets, Titanic three-deckers and ponderous frigates, in battles which lasted till little was left but the floating hulks for victor or vanquished. And it was now, for the first time, after the many fierce encounters of this colonial war, that Great Britain rose, acknowledged the greatest maritime power of the world.

Everywhere had France come forth from the struggle humbled, defeated, overwhelmed. Her armies were beaten, her navies shattered, her possessions overrun throughout the world. Quebec, Louisburg, Pondicherry, Plassey recall the reluctant steps by which she receded from her colonies in America, India, in Africa and the West Indies, — while not a few victories on land and sea caused her flag to vanish from the ocean, and her prestige on European battlefields to receive a crushing blow.

The war had been one for colonial supremacy. France had been beaten, and it was in her colonial possessions that she principally suffered. In North America, where Champlain had discovered a field for the enthusiastic labors of the heroic Jesuits, where Frontenac had protected and strengthened New France and Montcalm had heroically defended her, — France ceded the whole of her vast possessions, retaining for herself only two small islands, St. Pierre and Miquelon, on which to dry fish. England received Acadia, Cape Breton, the islands of the St. Lawrence, and all Canada. These were possessions absolutely necessary to her American empire, as will be seen by any one who notes how very small a part of the

Continent is included in the original thirteen colonies, even adding Nova Scotia. England then possessed the Continent from the Atlantic to the Mississippi. The remainder of America, so far as France had any claim to it, had already been ceded by her to Spain. Most of the English colonies claimed by their charters to run westward to the South Sea. But these charters were written when no man knew where the South Sea was, and such claim as England founded on Drake's discovery of New Albion was now hardly maintained even by England. So far as the Pacific coast of America was known it was generally supposed to belong to Spain.

In the West Indies, France fared better. Guadeloupe, Marie-Galante, Désirade, Martinique, and St. Lucia were restored to her. She had lost them in the war. But England was to retain Granada, St. Vincent, Dominica, and Tobago. In Africa, Goree was restored to France, but England retained her conquest of Senegal. But greater than these was the loss in India. There the French flag was no longer seen, and French diplomacy and intrigue were banished from the Indian courts to give place to English intrigue and diplomacy. La Bourdonnais and Dupleix had dreamed of splendid empires for France in Hindostan. The Carnatic, the Deccan, Bengal, were to come under French sway; the English and the Dutch were to be crowded to the wall; India was to be ruled by native princes under the hand of France; and from the vast storehouses of the East miraculous wealth should rejoice the hearts of all Frenchmen. This magnificent kingdom in the air, unsupported by aid from home, crumbled at the touch of the genius of Clive. Dupleix dreamed, and would have accomplished had it not been for maddening circumstances. Clive dreamed little, and did his work in spite of everything.

A glance at the map, then, after the Treaty of 1763, would have shown France possessed of a few dozen islands, scattered here and there, with a few posts on the outskirts of those continents which had been once overrun by her troops and traders, and ruled by her governors. On the map of Europe boundaries were, practically, unchanged. But even here victorious England was able to insult, if not injure, her prostrate foe. Dunkirk, the old stronghold for French cruisers, pirates, and smugglers, must lose its teeth. The harbor was to be filled up and the fortifications to be levelled to the ground. An English commissioner was to superintend these operations, and to remain afterward that nothing should be done in the way of rebuilding without his consent.

France felt this insult keenly. It is said of Vergennes, the minister, that he could never hear of that treaty without a shudder. It is not wonderful.

France was undoubtedly smarting to go to war with England. But was it natural that she should desire to aid these American colonies to gain their independence? Revolution against kings was no more a part of the Bourbon creed in 1776 than in 1820, the days of the Holy Alliance. Would Louis XVI. care to join a Revolutionary army, even against an inveterate foe? And again, these colonists were men who twenty years before had stood shoulder to shoulder against the French regiments in America, had marched with the Iroquois against Quebec and Montreal. George Washington, their general, was that very leader of the provincials who was associated painfully in the minds of the French, by the Jumonville affair, with that war which had ended in the expulsion of the French from America. Such reasons as these might well have turned the French people from the American alliance. Yet the French people in all classes,

even the Court, for once, disagreed with the King, and desired war with England in aid of the American colonies. Other influences than these were at work.

The French Revolution was not the impulsive outburst of a sudden popular whim. The long-growing discontent and dissatisfaction, the new-born ideas of social equality, of the rights of man, the theories put forth in the radical utterances of Voltaire and the Encyclopedists were in existence long before 1789. They existed in 1776, and, because of them, was the Declaration of Independence hailed by many in France as being the expression of the greatest and highest truths. Their hearts went out in great sympathy toward the upholders of these noble and lovely doctrines. And such sympathy, such enthusiasm, such feeling as this, was enough to utterly counteract and destroy any small feelings of former distrust and rivalry, any remnants of former hatred. France wished to aid America. The King was almost alone in his nation in his resolution to keep peace with Great Britain.

This was France when Franklin reached Bordeaux. She was a nation hostile to Great Britain, by the long-continued tradition of centuries, — an humbled nation smarting to recover her lost prestige and to console her wounded pride, — a nation whose heart was just beginning to throb with new ideas, which saw these new ideas trampled on, in danger of being crushed by this hereditary and victorious foe. She was also a nation which saw in the American trade an object worth striving for. It was natural that the United States should turn to France first among the nations of Europe.

The other nations of Europe were not so likely to welcome an alliance with the new nation as was France. The reasons which urged France were lacking with them. Yet it was not impossible that they might take up arms

against Great Britain, and to that end Congress sent its agents eventually to the Courts of Spain, of Austria, of Prussia, of Russia, and of Tuscany, and to the United Netherlands.

Spain was perhaps the most likely to join with France in alliance against Great Britain. Although by no means sharing in the hatred of centuries, Spain had been sufficiently beaten and humbled by the Seven years' war to regard England as an enemy rather than a friend; and should France take up arms, Spain was bound to her by the family compact and would be likely to follow her lead. But the great difficulty was here: Spain owned half the new world. Her colonies stretched over great parts of North, South, and Central America. It was hardly probable that she would aid the colonies of her neighbor to free themselves. The precedent was too dangerous.

Austria was at this time the ally of France. The old political system of Europe had been founded upon their rivalry. The Seven years' war changed that system utterly. France and Austria fought side by side. The courts of France and Austria also, though not bound together by the tie of blood, were now bound by that of marriage. Austria, in choosing between France and England, would naturally choose France. But it would be far more likely that she would choose neither, that she would stand neutral, even if France could be drawn into the struggle. Her sympathies were strongly with absolutism; she cared little enough for maritime or colonial affairs, and she had quite enough to do to keep her eye on Frederick on the north and upon the Turk on the south, without troubling herself with America.

Prussia, too, was unlikely to enter the contest, and for similar general reasons. Prussia had been the ally of

England in her former struggle with France; but the bonds of friendship had been loosened, and the old King was beginning to consider the expediency of French rather than English alliance.

Of the Northern States of Europe, it might be hoped that Russia would support some broad doctrine regarding the freedom of the seas. Denmark and Sweden would soon be interested in the same questions. Of the other States of Europe mention need hardly be made. The States of Italy were then, on the whole, too powerless and divided to provide any sensible aid, had they been so inclined. The two Sicilies were allied to France and Spain through the family compact, but they would in all probability see their safest path in neutrality. As for Portugal, her sympathies were decidedly English; and so soon as she had to decide, she closed her ports to American cruisers. Holland was the only European power beside France from which an alliance could be reasonably expected. The Dutch were old-time rivals of England, were a commercial nation, were on the whole at this time under French influence, and were bound by their own history to sympathize in the endeavors for American liberty. As a matter of fact, Holland was the first power after France to ally herself with the United States.

But if the French people longed for a war with England, their King, on the whole, disliked the idea of the war which must follow alliance with America. It is true that he felt keenly the exclusion of his country from the commercial system of the world, and would willingly have lent his aid to anything which should tend toward weakening the enormous colonial and maritime supremacy which Great Britain had obtained. Yet he disliked the idea of aiding rebellious subjects. Louis XVI. was a firm believer in the divine right of kings, and could not think

with complacency of aiding those who should rise against them. True, he hardly regarded George III. as a lawful monarch. He was continually pressed by assertions that it was useless for him to refrain from open hostilities, for that England, whether she subdued her rebellious colonies or not, would hardly wait for a pretext to seize the few West India Islands that still remained to France.[1] Yet his sense of right forbade his breaking faith unprovoked. He had no love for war; he knew that France was in no real condition for war. But Louis himself, with two or three of his ministers, were almost the only men in France who did not clamor for aid to the Americans and a war with England.

Finally the war party triumphed. Turgot, who foresaw the enormous expense that would be brought on a nearly bankrupt country by a great war, and who foresaw also the ultimate emancipation of the colonies, even should the aid of France be withheld, and the King, who shrunk from the idea of war in the abstract and disliked the thought of breaking faith with his hereditary foe without sufficient cause, were both overruled by the eager desire of the Court for a war of revenge against England, which should wipe out the shame of the treaty of Paris, and by the universal enthusiastic sympathy for a nation struggling for freedom. War was in the air. France drifted from real neutrality to secret and unrecognized alliance,

1 "The English ministry beaten on the Continent may seek indemnity at the expense of France and Spain." — Report of Bonvouloir. BANCROFT, viii. 331. "If England triumphs in America, it can be only at enormous expense, both in men and money. Now the only recompense that the English think of for so great a loss is to seize the French sugar islands. . . . If the Americans are conquerors, the moment they are free the English will be more than ever desirous of making good their loss by the easy capture of our American possessions." — Beaumarchais to the King. LOMÉNIE, ii. 103.

and from this unrecognized alliance she was rapidly pushed into open and undisguised war. When Franklin arrived in France she was in the second of these phases. The King and ministers declared themselves neutral, and yet cannon and military stores were withdrawn from the royal arsenals and landed on the shores of America, while a train of French officers offered their services to Washington. It was the business of Franklin to turn this second phase into the third, — open and undisguised alliance with America, and aid no longer secret against Great Britain. The change from real neutrality to secret alliance had been effected largely through the efforts of one man. The story of Franklin's stay in France would not be in any way complete without the history of the business house of Rodrique Hortalez and Company, and of its director, Caron de Beaumarchais.

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CHAPTER III.

CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

THE name of le Sieur de Beaumarchais is not an unfamiliar one to the reader of the French memoirs and correspondence of the reigns of Louis XV. and his successor. "By turns a politician, an agent, a man of business, an author, an advocate, a libertine, he seizes on all rôles at once, and thinks that he can fill each one satisfactorily," says an ill-natured chronicler.[1] We hear of him in all these capacities. A brilliant courtier, a favorite of the family of Louis XV., he is often heard of in tales of court intrigue; the most brilliant comedy writer since Molière, his "Marriage of Figaro" would not escape the notice of the journalists; a shrewd political agent, in favor with Maurepas, his connection with the romantic Chevalier d'Eon furnishes much material for speculation; a man of letters, a *beau esprit*, a copy of verses by him now and

[1] BACHAUMONT, XV. 186. The volumes of the "Mémoires secrètes pour servir à l'histoire de la République des lettres," etc., are very rich in allusions to Beaumarchais at about this time. Though usually quoted as "Mémoires of Bachaumont," only the first five volumes were written by that gentleman. The volumes which cover the earlier part of Franklin's stay in France were written by Pidansat de Mairobert, "a bold intriguer, a caustic conversationalist, an oracle at the *foyers* of the comedy, a courtier of the lieutenants of the police, . . . who figures before us as a follower, an imitator, a diminutive of Beaumarchais, but without his genius." A man of this stamp could hardly speak of his greater prototype without some prejudice; and accordingly we find that every mention of Beaumarchais in these volumes of Bachaumont is tinged by a hatred and a malice, which do not impair their value if every allowance be made.

then finds its way into the Mémoires;[1] a vigorous controversialist, his manifold disputes are much noted and commented upon by the sharp-eyed gentlemen, who have together preserved for us what is probably the most careful and minute picture ever made of the manners and literature of a time as little worthy of it as any that naturally occurs to one. There is, however, one point in the life of Beaumarchais as to which they are all in the dark; namely, his connection with Franklin, Deane, and Lee. On this topic, although we find some notice here or there, it is usually something set down with an utter misconception of the true nature of the manner in which Beaumarchais took up the American cause at the court of France, pressed it unceasingly upon the ministers and King, and finally won round Vergennes, and by his means the King, to sending secret aid to the Americans. So whatever we can get from memoir-writers on this subject will be of small importance to us. Fortunately, there are other sources of information.

To begin, then, at the beginning. Although known to us always as Beaumarchais, the courtier, the man of letters, the adventurer, and so on, he passed the first twenty-five years of his life as Pierre Augustin Caron, the watchmaker. His father, André Charles Caron, was a watchmaker before him, and a remarkably expert one; and the only son among six children was naturally marked out to follow the trade of his father. And while he worked as a watchmaker, he worked brilliantly and well, and made

[1] We quote a few lines from his "Stances sur les Femmes," which we do not remember to have seen copied in any English book.

"Retenez ce bon mot d'un sage,
(Des mœurs c'est le grand secret),
Toute femme vaut un hommage,
Bien peu sont dignes d'un regret."

certain inventions and improvements which made him in his own profession a person of some promise and consequence. But it was not his destiny to pass his life at a watchmaker's bench. A lucky marriage gave him the entrée at Court, and his own family, "obscure, mais intéressante," fostered the literary genius that lay dormant in him.[1] The inborn push and spirit of the man did the rest, so that in 1775 we find him a person of assured position both at Court and in the world of letters, — a man known and talked of, admired and hated, and, in fact, one of the prominent figures in the little world of Paris and Versailles, social, political, literary, judicial, and otherwise. He was just the man to pick up some wild or crack-brained scheme, push it through every obstacle and difficulty with theatrical determination, and arrive at the conclusion of his labors covered with gratitude, hatred, and scorn from the various parties concerned, — possibly, though not probably, with some financial remuneration, — and last, and to Beaumarchais not least, crowned with éclat, and invested with the compelled admiration of all the world.

This man in 1775 became wild with enthusiasm for America. During the summer of that year Beaumarchais went often to London on certain business for the King of France, unconnected with the subject of this memoir. This business was only a blind as far as his real interests were concerned; Beaumarchais wanted to know more

[1] In this watchmaker's family verses were constantly made and handed about, letters were written with care and read with admiration, and *bon mots* were exchanged with clever *abbés* and *gens des lettres*. Diderot was admired, and Richardson was adored. This last, by the way, will supply the curious with an amusing picture of the young Beaumarchais. "Another Grandison," writes his sister Julie with care in her note-book; "his genius, his goodness, the same noble and superior soul, equally sweet and honest; he is the friend of men. Grandison is the glory of all who surround him, and Beaumarchais their happiness."

than he did about the state of England at that time, and her attitude toward her rebellious colonies. He had various channels of information, through which he proposed to hear both sides; and being of an optimistic and enthusiastic nature, without a particularly clear and well-balanced intellect, on hearing much that was contradictory he very naturally formed an incorrect estimate of the state of parties. Lord Rochefort, one of his former friends, being now Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, told him much that was interesting, though perhaps not very well founded on fact. Another friend told him more, — John Wilkes, whose house was at this moment the centre of the Parliamentary opposition under George III., and therefore the rallying place for all particularly well-affected toward the American cause. At this time, although Gage was shut up in Boston by a Continental army, the Declaration of Independence had not yet entirely severed relations with the mother country. But the idea of complete separation was everywhere.

Beaumarchais at once reached a conclusion in which true and false were perhaps equally mingled. "Such a nation," says he, "must be invincible;" and here he was not far wrong. But he also says, "England is in such a crisis, such a disorder without and within, that she would be nearly on the brink of ruin if her neighbors and rivals were but in a state to think seriously of it." "The least check," he says further, "which the royal army shall receive in America, increasing the audacity of the people and of the opposition, may decide affairs in London when one least expects it; and if the King sees himself forced to give way, I tell you with terror that I do not believe his crown safer on his head than the heads of his ministers on their shoulders." This is exaggeration; it shows, however, the present temper of the man.

Beaumarchais presented his views to the King, but did not at this time urge any special action. This was in September, 1775. Three months more changed his views. He became convinced that France, if she had any regard for her own safety, must attack England. He went to London again and again, and returned each time with his sympathies for America stirred to their greatest extent. "The Americans will conquer," was the idea forever buzzing in his brain, — "the Americans will conquer, but how? It must be by the aid of France. France must give assistance, — if not openly, why then in secret." These ideas continually filled his mind, and excluded everything else. He had nothing in him of the calm calculation of Turgot, who had said in measured sentences, "Whatever may or ought to be the wish of the two crowns [of France and Spain], nothing can arrest the course of events, which sooner or later will bring about the absolute independence of the English Colonies. . . . It is a very delicate question to know if we can indeed help the Americans to ammunition or money. . . . We ought to limit ourselves to measures of caution, — to precipitate nothing unless the conduct of England shall give us reason to believe that she really thinks of attacking us. . . . As for us, the King knows the condition of his finances. . . . For a necessary war resources could be found; but war ought to be shunned as the greatest of misfortunes, since it would render impossible, perhaps forever, a reform absolutely necessary to the prosperity of the State and the solace of the people."

TURGOT.

With Beaumarchais we see a different thought, — a rush

of passionate and plausible argument, which over-clouds reason and substitutes for it enthusiasm.

On reaching home after one of these trips to London Beaumarchais penned —

PEACE OR WAR.[1]

To the King alone:

The King of England, the ministry, the Parliament, the opposition, the nation, the English people, the parties which tear asunder the State agree in giving up all hope of bringing back the American Colonies without a severe struggle. Lord North and Lord Germaine would willingly give up to Lord Shelburne and Lord Rockingham, but the latter fear to accept; for they fear the Americans are so much encouraged that they will not now accept the conditions which they begged two years since.

Now, Mr. Arthur Lee, secret deputy of the Colonies at London, is discouraged by the uselessness of his applications to France for assistance. He offers a secret treaty of commerce in exchange for secret help.

Consider everything, Sire. You will see that —

1°. If England triumphs, they will seek to make up the cost necessary for such a struggle by seizing our West India sugar islands.

2°. If America conquers, the English will try to make up the loss of some of her American Colonies by acquiring all of ours.

3°. If England gives up the Colonies without a blow, the result is the same, save that England will be stronger and the better able to make war.

[1] This document may be found in full in Loménie's "Beaumarchais et son Temps," ii. 99, as well as for the most part in Parton's Franklin, ii. 181.

4°. If America and England are reconciled, the Americans, enraged against France by her present refusal to aid them, threaten to join the English in the attack.

What to do? We can preserve peace only by giving aid to the Americans; two or three millions may save us our sugar islands, worth three hundred.

Beaumarchais put his case very strongly, but the King was unmoved. Vergennes, who at heart wished for war, remained also unmoved. Beaumarchais pressed him hard. So did the English Cabinet. At length Vergennes, wearied out by the latter, succumbed to the former. Beaumarchais at once formulated his scheme. A commercial house sustained by government aid should furnish the Americans money or munitions. 3,000,000 livres would do wonders.[1]

VERGENNES.

Vergennes decided to propose it to the King. "But," he said to Beaumarchais, "the operation must have essentially in the eyes of the English government, and even in the eyes of the Americans, the aspect of an individual speculation, to which we are strangers. That it may be so in appearance, it must be so to a certain extent in reality. We will give you secretly a million. We will endeavor to persuade the Court of Spain to unite in giving you another. With these two millions you shall found a great commercial establishment, and at your own risk and peril you shall furnish to America arms and everything else necessary to sustain war. Our arsenals will deliver to you arms

[1] One livre was twenty sous, and corresponds to the present franc.

and munitions, but you shall pay for them. You will not demand money of the Americans, for they have none; but you can ask return in their staple products." Such was the plan for secret aid. The King assented. The two millions were obtained, and Beaumarchais constituted himself the managing partner of the great firm of Rodrique Hortalez and Co.[1] All this was in the spring and summer of 1776.

As soon as the promise of the million was given by France, Beaumarchais wrote to Arthur Lee: "The difficulties which I have found in my negotiations with the minister have led me to form a company which shall send as soon as possible munitions and powder to your friends, taking returns in tobacco at Cape Français." [2]

Affairs would have run their course more smoothly had Beaumarchais not written this letter, for very shortly afterward Silas Deane,[3] the recognized commissioner from

[1] Mairobert, the "diminutif de Beaumarchais," knows not what to make of the sudden good fortune of his much-hated master. "They say to-day," he remarks about this time, "that the cause of the new fortune of Sieur de Beaumarchais is the liking which the Count de Maurepas has taken for him. He amuses this minister by his sarcasms, and is singularly beloved by him;" and later (27th Sept.), "Sieur de Beaumarchais is developing his vast schemes for the future. He has hired a very great hôtel in the Rue du Temple, where he establishes a business house of considerable importance; he has very large funds at his disposition." (Bachaumont.)

There is also much speculation as to the cause of Beaumarchais's journeys to London, — which it is decided are caused by curiosity in regard to the Chevalier D'Eon, — and much ill-natured comment on a magnificent diamond ring, — worth 80,000 livres, which Beaumarchais asserted had been given him by the Empress, Queen Maria Theresa.

[2] Now Cape Haytien.

[3] Deane assumes in the Mémoires a somewhat romantic appearance, rather incompatible with the character of a Connecticut merchant. "D'Ean," is the manner in which at least one Frenchman alludes to the worthy agent. — Corr. Secrète, iv. 384.

Congress arrived in Paris, and after a little, Beaumarchais came to a complete understanding with him and at once broke off any connection with Lee, as far as the munitions went. This was natural. Deane had been commissioned by Congress for this very purpose. Lee had not. Beaumarchais, preferring to deal with an accredited agent, dropped Lee and did his business with Deane.

This occasioned many difficulties, all arising from one source, — Arthur Lee. This man caused a great deal of trouble to his fellow-commissioners, first and last; about as much as did the backwardness of the French ministry, the zeal of the British cruisers, the laxity of the overpressed Continental Congress across the water, and the low state of American credit, all put together. One can hardly write the story of the time with any sympathy for Franklin, Deane, or Beaumarchais, or even for abstract right, without showering a good deal of abuse on Arthur Lee. His was one of those characters which, though probably reasonable enough to their possessors, seem to others to be almost miraculous in their littleness and meanness. It is no business of ours to place vituperative adjectives to the discredit of Arthur Lee, and it seems unnecessary; for the facts of the case as they are understood to-day are utterly incomprehensible without a very low view of his character. To state the good side first, however, — to our knowledge it was never charged to him that he meditated treason, as did Arnold; that he was financially dishonorable, as was charged against Silas Deane; that he neglected what he conceived to be his duty toward Congress, as did Thomas Morris. The only charge that can be truly made against him is that he was so blinded by lack of the appreciation which he conceived to be deserved, and envy against those who had been entrusted with duties which he conceived to be his by right, as to suffer his

ideas of truth to become quite confused, and to lie like a trooper whenever he saw an opportunity to say anything to the discredit of Franklin, Deane, or Beaumarchais.

With the last of these, as we have seen, he had been intimate. To this intimacy Beaumarchais owed very largely his later financial embarrassments. He met this young and enthusiastic Virginian, of one of the best families in America, and at once fraternized with him.

Beaumarchais was in London on a semi-political errand. Lee exaggerated his position. He supposed that he saw in Beaumarchais a secret but duly accredited negotiator between the French Court and himself. Before the firm of Rodrique Hortalez and Co. was formed, it is very probable that Beaumarchais, either designedly or not, conveyed to Lee the idea that the Court of France had determined to give outright the supplies that were sent to Congress. Lee never disabused himself of this idea. He sent letter after letter to Congress affirming that the munitions were a free gift from the King of France, though a disguised one. Congress, having to choose between the fantastic letters of the romantic man of business who signed himself Rodrique Hortalez, requesting tobacco and other things, and the repeated and earnest assertions of Lee that no tobacco need be forwarded, very naturally chose to follow the course laid out by the latter. They sent no tobacco, and answered no letters from Beaumarchais.

Mr. Parton says that Arthur Lee "*knew* that the French ministry had changed their original plan of sending money and stores direct to Congress, and that in consequence of this change Beaumarchais had set up a commercial house in order to accomplish the same end." This is probably true. But there is no evidence known to us to prove that Lee knew that any remuneration was really expected for them. He probably considered the house of

Hortalez to be merely a blind to Lord Stormont, set up without an idea of doing its work on business principles. With this idea on his mind, which was a very natural outcome of the magnificent promises made to him, in all probability, by Beaumarchais when they first met in London, and urged by very bitter hatred of Beaumarchais and Deane, Lee looked on every attempt on the part of the house of Hortalez to obtain a return for the cargoes as a corrupt effort on the part of the confederates, Beaumarchais and Silas Deane, to enrich themselves at the expense of Congress. Lee seems to have been a man who having fixed an idea in his head was absolutely unable to remove it. He honestly thought, as we believe, that the King of France meant to give Congress the necessary aid. He was furious with Beaumarchais because that gentleman preferred to treat with a recognized agent of Congress rather than with himself. He was furious with Deane, who seemed to have robbed him of the chance of acquiring deserved honor by doing an important service to the country he loved. He hated Franklin on his arrival, because, on account of the wildly enthusiastic welcome accorded the sage, he himself seemed to be reduced from first or second place to third or even fourth. He was angry with the French for not being sufficiently forward; with the Spaniards for being very backward. His own undertakings had all been unsuccessful. If we consider the effect of all this upon a wildly ambitious but still very cramped, narrow, and envious nature we shall easily evolve Arthur Lee's behavior. It was not excusable, but it is not to be wondered at. The nature of the man compelled him to acts which had he seen them in their true light he must have scorned. He was a man who longed to do something great, but who proved by his impatience and wrong-headedness in a subordinate capacity that, had

he had the opportunity to distinguish himself by some noble achievement, he could hardly have succeeded.[1]

It was on June 10, 1776, that Beaumarchais received at the orders of Vergennes the sum of a million livres from the French treasury, and two months afterward he received another million from the Court of Spain. Some time subsequently he received another million from France; and, first and last, two millions more were collected by his friends. These five millions were to form the capital stock of a great commercial house. Beaumarchais was the house. But he modestly veiled his own personality under the romantic and yet magnificent name of Rodrique Hortalez and Company. Acting for this firm, Beaumarchais hired an immense hôtel in Paris (Hôtel de Hollande, — the Dutch ambassador had dwelt there in the days of the Grand Monarque), and set up business upon a great though somewhat eccentric scale.

In July, as we have said, Silas Deane arrived in Paris. He had been commissioned by the Continental Congress to treat with the French ministry. It was the mission of this gentleman to make propositions to the French Court for an alliance and a treaty of commerce, and to correspond and consult with the other agents of the United States in Europe, — Dr. Dubourg, Arthur Lee, and the rest, — in regard to the welfare of the Colonies.

Dr. Dubourg was the first of the agents to whom Deane presented himself.[2] He first presented Deane to

[1] Franklin, three years later, seems to have judged his colleague fairly enough. He says, in speaking of another matter: "Dr. Lee's accusation of Captain Landais for insanity was probably well founded; as in my judgment would have been the same accusation if it had been brought by Landais against Lee; for though neither of them are permanently mad, they are both so at times, and the insanity of the latter is the most mischievous." — Letter to Dr. Cooper, 12th Dec. 1780.

[2] With cordial letters from Franklin. Dubourg, of whom we have

Vergennes on the 17th of July. Before Vergennes then, Deane, as directed, laid the desires of Congress, asking in particular for two hundred pieces of cannon, for arms, munitions, clothing, and equipage for 25,000 men. Vergennes naturally refused to accede to this request. But although he said that His Majesty had no idea of furnishing America with all these necessaries, he mentioned Beaumarchais, as a merchant who might possibly meet his views on reasonable terms.

Beaumarchais at once wrote to Deane, as a pure man of business, offering his co-operation. Deane wrote back, enclosing him a copy of his commission and of the portion of his instructions relating to the matter. He went on to speak of the terms on which the arms and all were to be sent. "A year," he said, "is the longest credit which my compatriots are in the habit of taking, and the Congress having engaged a great quantity of tobacco in Virginia and in Maryland as well as of other goods, which shall be embarked as soon as ships can be obtained, I have no doubt that considerable returns of staple product will be returned to you in six months, and that the whole will be paid for in a year." One or two more letters passed between the two gentlemen. One thing seems perfectly plain, the whole transaction was a business dealing. The

spoken already, had by this time, given up the practice of medicine, and was devoting himself to the American cause with a zeal equal to that of Beaumarchais, though without such marked success. He was, to a certain extent, in the confidence of Vergennes, and therefore undoubtedly knew of the plans of the French ministry in regard to furnishing secret aid to America, and possibly longed to have a part of it pass through his hands. In such a state of things it was not at all unnatural that this quiet, learned, earnest old man of science should conceive a profound mistrust for the gay and sparkling comedian whom he saw take into his hands the 2,000,000 livres, which the worthy Doctor thought would come to far better use if passed through his own. It was natural that Dubourg should not labor to bring Deane and Beaumarchais together.

house of Hortalez was to supply munitions, and be paid in tobacco in a year's time, if possible.

Beaumarchais then set to work to get his munitions together. It was a difficult piece of work. The business was one rigorously prohibited, and the prohibition was not unlikely to be carried into effect; for Lord Stormont, the British ambassador, was lynx-eyed by means of his numerous spies.[1] However, Beaumarchais seems to have been equal to the emergency. His stores were to be drawn, one will remember, from the royal arsenals. He collected about the amount asked of Vergennes by Deane, and sent them down to Havre and to Nantes, where Deane had promised to provide American vessels to transport them. The American vessels did not appear, and the matter dragged wretchedly. But as autumn advanced, the condition of things improved. Beaumarchais himself fitted out three ships,[2] loaded them with munitions, and

[1] Stormont was apparently as busy about this time as were the commissioners. This gives a hint of the kind of work which occupied him: "A banker at Nantes was the agent for all that Messrs. Franklin and Deane were sending to America, as well as of what came thence. This unworthy man had the baseness to allow himself to be corrupted and to betray the confidence of his principals, by giving up to the ministry at London the last dispatches which he had received from Paris to send to Philadelphia." — Corr. Secrète, iv. 384. This is contemporary rumor, and the reader will observe the changes which were in fact made in the American agency at Nantes.

[2] "The famous Beaumarchais, who for some time has been busying himself in our political affairs, had been charged with the preparation of this frigate [which the writer seems to think was sent out by royal authority], and having received orders to despatch her with as much secrecy as speed, started off for Havre *incognito* under the name of the Sieur Durand, an iron-dealer; but by a fatality which often disconcerts the schemes of high politics, either through an indiscretion on the part of the man of much business, or because he had been betrayed or found out, he was not a little astonished to see himself honored in the rôle of comic author, on his passage through Rouen, where the *comédiens* had advertised the 'Barber of Séville,' and had announced the presence of the author. The frigate

was about to have them sent to sea, when down came an order from the Court that the ships should not sail. The largest, the "Amphitrite," had already sailed. Beaumarchais finally obtained permission for the other two to sail, and all seemed well. But things did not go as well as they might have done; for the "Amphitrite," after being seventeen days at sea, returned to L'Orient. This happened from a very pregnant cause of trouble during the Revolution on both sides of the Atlantic. On the suggestion of Dubourg and Beaumarchais,[1] Deane unfortunately allowed himself to add to the military stores sent over to America a number of officers from the French army to teach the Americans to make use of them. It was not a successful scheme. Washington and the American officers did not want the Frenchmen. The officers, having one and all been promised a grade one higher than that which they enjoyed in the French army, were almost always disappointed in what they found. In France they were the most fearful nuisance to Franklin and the other American agents, as will appear later. At present, it is enough to say that Du Coudray, the chief officer of artillery, was dissatisfied with his quarters on board the "Amphitrite," and compelled the captain to return, that he might get better. The "Amphitrite" put in at L'Orient.

Here arose a fresh stir. Stormont began his complaints.

nevertheless set sail; but as a heavy cannonading was heard shortly afterward, and as nothing has since been heard of her, one is inclined to believe that she was captured, or else sunk to the bottom by a couple of English cruisers which have been seen in the bight." — Corr. Secrète, iv. 71.

[1] Most probably, although Loménie, in his life of Beaumarchais, says that Arthur Lee made the suggestion. "I complied with Monsieur Beaumarchais's proposal of sending out a number of officers with the stores," said Deane some years later. ("Silas Deane in France," page 26.) And Dubourg, as early as June 10, 1776, had done something about the matter, as may be seen in his letter of that date in the Sparks MSS. printed in Parton.

Vergennes revoked his permission to Du Coudray to go to America. Beaumarchais wrote to ask why the "Amphitrite" was not half across the ocean by this time, and Du Coudray wrote that he did not like his quarters.

Finally, however, after infinite difficulty Vergennes relented, and Du Coudray relented too; and the "Amphitrite" got to sea again, this time with the other smaller ships in company; and the little fleet, after a safe passage, arrived at Portsmouth in New Hampshire.[1] The three ships brought over ammunition, cannon, muskets, clothes, and boots for 25,000 men, — no small help to the American people, who, as Loménie remarks, "being assembled on the shore, clapped their hands."

It was in the middle of all this hurry and worry (Dec. 21, 1776) that Franklin arrived in Paris, and took up his lodgings with Deane. It was high time that a strong hand should take charge of affairs. Deane was heavily overweighted; Lee was busy as ever, but accomplished little that was good. It is true Hortalez and Co. were engaged in loading their ships for America; but Lord Stormont was vigorously urging Vergennes, with all the

[1] With Du Coudray sailed Thomas Conway who, to the misfortune of America, became a general. Hence the following letter, which came to Franklin at about the time that Thomas Conway was landing in Portsmouth: —

SIR, — I commence to read and write a little the english, but I know not speak yet that language; wherefor, I bold not, to go see you, nevertheless I pray you of signify to me the a day and a hour where I can render my homage to you. I am the wiffe of Thomas Conway. departed by L'Amphitrite for to aid his Brother americains, end to share the glory with them. I wait the honour of your answer with impatience

I am sir

with the best great veneration your

humble servant

d [ame] B. CONWAY.

À Ville D'avvay ce 14 Avril 1777.

weight of an ambassador from a friendly power, to have them unloaded; and the French minister could do little else than send vigorous orders and connive at all disobedience. The French government seemed losing faith in the ultimate success of the American cause. Deane was in despair, at his wits' end. He had heard nothing from home, he was weighed down by his work, he was continually worried by Lee, he was irritated almost beyond endurance with the eccentricities of Beaumarchais, who seemed to consider the whole affair a dramatic situation. His hair must have turned white had not Franklin appeared.

On the 26th of September Congress had elected Franklin, Deane, and Lee commissioners to make a treaty of alliance with France, and to represent the Colonies at the Court of Versailles. It was the 26th of October that Franklin left Philadelphia. The next morning he sailed on the "Reprisal," Captain Wickes, and on December 3 landed at Auray in Brittany, whence he reached Nantes on the 7th. The voyage had been a short one, but a rough experience for a man of seventy. Franklin felt this voyage more severely than any of his others, before or after. The sailors' fare was by no means good for his health, and although we doubt not that at the time he bore up in the most uncomplaining manner, four years later he allowed himself to insert in his journal the fact that he had to live chiefly on salt beef, the fowls being too hard for his teeth. "Being poorly nourished," he says, "I was very weak on my arrival." As for Captain Wickes, the tedium of the voyage was relieved by the capture of two English prizes, which had just left French ports. The English cruisers also did their best to furnish excitement by frequently pursuing the sloop of war; but at no time did they come so near as to cause any real danger, though the crew

was several times beat to quarters. The voyage though rough was safe, and on the 21st of December, as we have said, Franklin reached Paris from Nantes.

Very nearly the first business which Franklin had to do in France, was to inform Congress of the true state of the house of Rodrique Hortalez and Co., and of the nature of the cargoes of aid which it sent. For Congress was, as we have seen, very much embarrassed by differing reports. Deane was the recognized agent, appointed to treat with the French for aid, and was undoubtedly cognizant of the true commercial standing of the firm; and Congress had received letters from him and from Beaumarchais, asking for the payment in tobacco which had been agreed upon. But the payment did not come. For Arthur Lee, as has been said, was always busy writing to Congress letters of an entirely different tone. "M. de Vergennes the minister, and his secretary [he writes], have repeatedly assured us that no return is expected for the cargoes sent by Beaumarchais. This gentleman is no man of business; he is known to be a political agent employed by the Court of France." In face of these contradictory reports, Congress, seeing some small ground for choosing whether to pay for the munitions or not, very naturally, though very wrongly, decided not to pay for them; that is to say, they did not pay for them. They were at a distance; they were by no means aware of the real state of things; they were urged by the personal friends of Arthur Lee; and they were pressed by other most urgent claims for their time and money; and it is perhaps not remarkable that they decided to do nothing about the matter.[1]

But one would imagine that Franklin would have informed them of the true state of things. That he knew

[1] "On the one hand, Congress would be unwilling to evidence a disregard for and contemptuous refusal of His most Christian Majesty; so, on

whether payment was or was not expected cannot perhaps be determined; but it seems most likely that he might have known all about it if he had chosen. Beaumarchais, Vergennes, and Deane would any one of them have told him the truth on the matter. But Franklin probably thought it none of his business[1] (as indeed it was not, except in a general sort of way). He probably had no very great confidence in Beaumarchais, for he was very intimate with Dr. Dubourg, who greatly mistrusted the gay man of business; and he probably at this time saw no reason for taking the opposite side to Arthur Lee, who was held in America in rather more consideration than Silas Deane. So Franklin let that part of the matter take care of itself, and applied himself at once to the business of the joint commission.

It is difficult to get at the truth of this matter. Even so soon as the summer of 1781, only five years afterwards, Franklin was, on the whole, in the dark on the subject. In that year he wrote a letter to M. Durival, which we will print here rather than later, for it serves to give Franklin's views upon a confused transaction.

the other, they are unwilling to put into private pockets what was gratuitously designed for the public good."—Committee of Commerce to the Commissioners, May 16, 1778.

It is hard and perhaps useless to try to make sure whether Beaumarchais did or did not make for himself large sums out of these transactions. The opinion of those who knew the town (Mairobert in Bachaumont's Memoires, especially) was that Beaumarchais was nothing more than a very clever speculator, and that he lined his pockets well with the profits of his enthusiastic partisanship. "This man," says Abbé Georgel on the subject, "was no stranger to the art of enriching himself;" and again, "Beaumarchais, who found in this secrecy and monopoly an immense profit, would have preferred that our Court should continue neutral."

[1] "My colleagues [says Deane, later] determined that as it was an affair undertaken solely by me, they would not meddle with it, but left it with me to conduct it through in the best manner I could."

PASSY, June 12, 1781.

SIR, — I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 8th inst., and am perfectly of the same sentiments with you respecting the exactitude and clearness necessary to be preserved in all money transactions, in order to prevent confusion and misunderstanding when they come to be examined by those who may succeed us. Hitherto there seems to have been no regular method adopted for our proceedings. We at first gave, as you observe, simple receipts to M. D'Harvelay. Nothing more was then required of us. Our banker has sometimes given his receipts. Afterwards his receipts have been changed for others given by myself with my colleagues, or by me alone. Those again have been afterwards brought back to be exchanged for others of a proposed new form, and the last form has a blank in which is to be inserted the name of some person, we know not who, to whom the money is payable. From the want of explicitness in our past proceedings, though but of a few years' date, there has already arisen a good deal of misunderstanding and dispute between Mr. Deane and Mr. Lee relating to the aids received through the hands of M. de Beaumarchais, and misunderstandings may hereafter arise between this Court and the Congress, relating to the subsequent aids, if the intentions and engagements of the parties are not clearly expressed and ascertained. To prevent this I shall very cheerfully enter with you into any method that may be effectual to clear and ascertain what is past, and be proper to render all our future transactions in money affairs perspicuous and indisputable. For this purpose it may be well to review them from the beginning.

In 1776, being then in Congress, I received a letter from Mr. Lee, acquainting me that M. Beaumarchais had applied to him in London, informing him that 200,000

guineas had been put into his hands, and was at the disposal of the Congress; Mr. Lee added that it was agreed between them that he, M. Beaumarchais, should remit the same in arms, ammunition, etc., under the name of Hortalez & Co. Several cargoes were accordingly sent. Mr. Lee understood this to be a private aid from the Government of France;[1] but M. Beaumarchais has since demanded from Congress payment of a gross sum as due to him, and has received a considerable part, but has rendered no particular account. I have, by order of Congress, desired him to produce his account, that we might know exactly what we owed and for what; and he has several times promised it, but has not yet done it, and in his conversations he often mentions, as I am told, that we are greatly in his debt. These accounts in the air are unpleasant, and one is neither safe nor easy under them. I wish therefore you could help me to obtain a settlement of them. It has been said that Mr. Deane, unknown to his colleagues, wrote to Congress in favor of M. Beaumarchais' demand, on which Mr. Lee accuses him of having, to the prejudice of his constituents, negotiated a gift into a debt. At present, all that transaction is in darkness; and we know not whether the whole, or a part, or no part of the supplies he furnished, were at the expense of Government, the reports we have had being so inconsistent and contradictory, nor if we are in debt for them, or any part of them, whether it is the King or M. de Beaumarchais that is our creditor. We once understood that the whole was a gift, and wrote so to Congress; as you will see by the extract I send you of our letter. Perhaps we were misinformed, and we wish to be set right.

[1] His reason for so understanding was that Beaumarchais had probably promised him this private aid, and then told him nothing to the contrary after he had begun to transact business with Deane, who understood the true nature of the arrangement throughout.

The first two millions[1] granted to the Congress by his Majesty we also understood to be a gift, as you will see by the extract of another letter written by us immediately after the transaction. As, from the circumstances of the times, nothing of this kind was mentioned in any writing from the Ministry to us, and perhaps no minute was kept by them of the intention of the grant, it has possibly slipped out of memory, and thence may arise the present idea of the imperfection of those first receipts and the propriety of changing them for others promising a reimbursement. This, however, will occasion no dispute; for if the Congress are authentically informed that we mistook the King's intention in that grant, and that it was really a loan and not a gift, I am persuaded they will cheerfully agree to reimburse it as soon as they are able. The information necessary for Congress will, I imagine, be best given in an official memoir or account stating from the beginning the several aids furnished to the United States for which reimbursement was expected; those by M. Beaumarchais if the Government was concerned in them, those by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, by the Minister of War, by the Minister of the Marine, or any others authorized by Government. This amount being presented to Congress and agreed to by them, will constitute the debt clearly; and without this or some equivalent proceeding to authorize me, I do not at present see how I can take upon me to alter the nature of the receipts that were given by my colleagues jointly with me; for that would subject me to the same censure from

[1] The reader must not confuse these two millions with the two millions furnished to Beaumarchais. These two millions, as will be seen by the extracts following, were obtained in the winter of 1777, after Franklin had arrived in France. Beaumarchais' two millions were furnished him in the summer previous, for a special purpose, as we have seen, before Franklin had been appointed a commissioner.

my enemies as Mr. Deane has experienced. With great esteem I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

Enclosed with this is "Extract of Letter from the Commissioners of the United States of America at the Court of France to the Committee of Foreign Affairs at Philadelphia," dated March 12, 1777 : —

"We entered accordingly into a treaty with that company (the Farmers Genl.), which meeting with difficulty in settling the terms, we are informed that a grant was made us of two millions of livres from the Crown, of which 500,000 was ready to be paid us down, an equal sum should be paid the beginning of April, July, and October; that such was the King's generosity, he exacted no conditions or promise of repayment, he only required that we should not speak to any of our having received this aid."

Extract of another letter from the same to the same. Dated Oct. 7, 1777 : —

"We entreat that the greatest care may be taken that no part of this information may transpire, nor of the assurances we have received that no repayment will ever be required from us of what has been already given us either in money or military stores."

CHAPTER IV.

FRANKLIN'S COMMISSION.

THE year 1776 [1] saw the most dramatic changes in the fortunes of America. At the beginning, George III. was the acknowledged King of America. America was in rebellion against "the ministry," or affected to be. This English King had an army of 10,000 men in Boston, a smaller garrison in New York, and other garrisons in other ports. On the 17th of March this army left Boston for Halifax. No English soldier was left in New England. Gen. Clinton had left New York on the 11th of February; but Gov. Tryon remained there on a ship-of-war in the harbor. His provisions and water were cut off by the insurgents on the 14th of April.

The American generals knew that New York was the key to the whole position, if England seriously meant offensive war. As soon, therefore, as General Howe left Boston for Halifax with his fleet, the Continental Army was moved to New York City, and some works, not inconsiderable, were begun for its defence. The defeated army gathered at Halifax, and was largely reinforced. On the 28th of June Howe reappeared on the American coast.

[1] There is an amusing speculation by Theodore Parker, — who, in ridicule of modern analytical criticism of history, shows how clear it is that the date July 4, 1776, is mythical, being derived from a latent superstition of the Americans, connected with the mystical number **4**. The *Fourth* of March is the date of their second Constitution. *Four* months after comes the *Fourth* of July. All this is clearly mythical. The date of the year is as mythical. It is simply four fours, — $444 \times 4 = 1776$.

He had under him a force of 31,625 men, the largest army which was ever collected in the region now occupied by the United States, before the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861.

With him came his brother, — the two to act as commissioners for peace. They had been appointed on the theory that an olive-branch was to be shown with one hand, while invincible thunder-bolts were brandished in the other. An older brother of these two Howes had been killed at Ticonderoga, in Abercromby's[1] fatuous advance of the year 1758. The Howes were the cousins once removed of George III., — their mother, Sophia, being the illegitimate daughter of Sophia Kilmansegge and George I. To this connection they owed their promotion in army and navy; and from this connection Great Britain reaped such advantages as she reaped from placing William Howe in command of the forces which were to reduce the Colonies to submission. The Lord Howe who was killed at Ticonderoga bore the royal names of George Augustus. The two commissioners, on their arrival, took no action with the olive-branch until after the battle of Long Island. In this battle General Howe showed real military ability, and the American generals, it may be said, without exception, showed their lack of training on a large scale. Washington said, three months after, that not one of them had seen two regiments together in line of battle before the war began. The American army was entirely outnumbered. It was outflanked and defeated. After the retreat from Long Island, there seemed, if ever, a favorable chance for negotiation; and Lord Howe sent General Sullivan, who had been taken prisoner in the battle, to Congress with a verbal message. Sullivan was directed to commit this message to writing. Its purport

[1] He was called "Nabbie Cromby" by the New England contingent.

was that, while Lord Howe could not at present treat with Congress as such, he wished he might have a conference with some of the members as private gentlemen. Lord Howe said that he and General Howe had full powers to compromise the dispute on advantageous terms; that many things which Congress had never asked might and ought to be granted to them. Sullivan added that Lord Howe had told him that he would set the Act of Parliament wholly aside, and that Parliament had no right to tax America, or meddle with her internal policy. Congress replied by sending Franklin, John Adams, and Rutledge as its committee to treat with Howe, directing them to appear as a committee only, and in no sort as private gentlemen. John Adams opposed this overture from the beginning. Because he opposed it he was unanimously chosen as one of the committee. They went to Staten Island, and had a courteous interview with Howe, of which they gave a report to Congress on the 17th of September. No difficulty had really taken place from any etiquette as to whether they were present as individuals or as a committee. But the Americans could not and would not assent to any terms which did not acknowledge independence, and such terms Lord Howe had no power to grant.

In the conversation at Staten Island, Lord Howe spoke gratefully of the honors paid to his brother by the State of Massachusetts. "He felt for America as for a brother, and if America should fall he should feel and lament it like the loss of a brother." Dr. Franklin replied, with a smile and a bow, "My Lord, we will do our utmost endeavors to save your lordship that mortification." Lord Howe replied sensitively, "I suppose you will endeavor to give us employment in Europe." To this remark the committee made no reply by word or look.[1]

[1] John Adams's Works, iii. 79.

Meanwhile Congress was already considering the questions of negotiations with foreign powers. Even before the Declaration of Independence a committee had been appointed to consider that subject, of which John Adams and Franklin were both members. "Independence" and "foreign alliances" were terms used almost in the same breath. Indeed, John Dickinson, in his speech pleading for delay, — which is the only speech preserved of the first day of July, — urges that a Declaration of Independence at that moment would be disrespectful to the Court of France, to whom they had already sent an envoy. Franklin says, in one of his later letters, that he always opposed the making overtures to foreign nations for such treaties; that he thought the country was a virgin country, and that she should be asked first, and should not make advances. But, whatever his original feeling was, he gave himself frankly to the effort in hand, and he and Mr. John Adams drew up a form of a treaty which was submitted to Congress on the 18th of July.[1] This form was purely commercial, and contemplated no connection beyond reciprocity in commerce, and a mutual assurance of protection. Congress was not satisfied with this draft. They enlarged the committee by adding R. H. Lee and Wilson, with directions to form instructions for commissioners which should offer further proposals to foreign governments, such as might induce them to negotiate. In the final report Mr. Adams probably did not share.

On the 17th of September the committee reported the instructions to the commissioners.[2]

[1] Mr. C. F. Adams supposes that the greater part of the labor fell upon John Adams.

[2] As these instructions seem never to have been printed except in the "Secret Journals of Congress," which is now a rare book, we reprint the essential parts of them here, with the additional instructions of October

The plan for a treaty to be submitted to the consideration of the King of France contemplated only and simply a commercial alliance. By articles one and two, it was provided that the subjects of the respective parties should be placed on the same footing in ports of the other nation as were her own people as regards duties, etc. Article third was on the fishery, and guaranteed to the King of France the rights laid down to him in the Treaty of Paris, 1763. The next two articles reciprocally bound each party to protect vessels and persons belonging to the other whenever in their dominions. The next (sixth) bound the contracting parties in an endeavor to suppress piracy. In the seventh the King of France promised to defend ships and subjects of the United States in the Mediterranean from any of the Barbary powers. The eighth article contains almost the only concession Congress thought of offering to France in return for her recognition, beyond what was then of great value, the American trade. It provided that "if, in consequence of this treaty, the King of Great Britain should declare war against the most Christian King, the said United States shall not assist Great Britain in such a war, with men, money, ships, or any of the articles in this treaty denominated contraband." The next article (ninth) bound the King of France never to invade New Britain, Nova Scotia, Acadia, Canada, Florida, Newfoundland, Cape Breton, St. Johns, or Anticosti, stating that it was the future destiny of the United States to extend over the whole Continent. Article ten forbade fishing to either party in the dominions of the other. The eleventh provided that the rights laid down in the second article for United States citizens should extend to any West India islands France might

16th, and an abstract of the proposed treaty. A knowledge of them is quite necessary for understanding the position of Franklin in France.

conquer. The twelfth provided that the West India exports to the United States should be taxed no higher than those from France herself. The thirteenth, that molasses so exported should have no tax at all laid upon it. The next article (fourteenth) exempted United States citizens in France from the action of the *droit d'aubaine*. The remainder (articles 15–30) were on the rights of neutrals at sea and other kindred matters. Contraband was defined, the maxim that free ships make free goods and its converse was stated, the right of search was mutually conceded in war, certificates and sea-letters were provided for. Two articles forbade subjects of either power to accept commissions as privateers, or letters of marque, from a third power to be used against the other contracting party, and forbade either party to allow a foreign privateer to be fitted out in her ports against the other. To this treaty were annexed forms of sea-letters and passports to be used in time of war.

With this plan for a treaty was submitted the instructions to the commissioners who were to attempt its negotiation.

Instructions to [——].

There is delivered to you herewith a plan of a treaty with his most Christian majesty of France, approved of in Congress, on the part of the United States; and you are hereby instructed to use every means in your power for concluding it, conformably to the plan you have received.

If you shall find that to be impracticable, you are hereby authorized to relax the demands of the United States, and to enlarge their offers agreeably to the following directions.

If his most Christian majesty shall not consent that the inhabitants of the United States shall have the privi-

leges proposed in the second article, then the United States ought not to give the subjects of his most Christian majesty the privileges proposed in the first article; but that the United States shall give to his most Christian majesty the same privileges, liberties, and immunities, at least, and the like favor in all things which any foreign nation the most favored shall have provided, his most Christian majesty shall give to the United States the same benefits, privileges, and immunities which the most favored nation now has, uses, or enjoys.

And in case neither of these propositions of equal advantages is agreed to, then the whole of the said articles are to be rejected, rather than obstruct the further progress of the treaty.

The fourth article must be insisted on.

The seventh article ought to be obtained if possible, but should be waived rather than that the treaty should be interrupted by insisting upon it.

His most Christian majesty agreeing, nevertheless, to use his interest and influence to procure passes from the States mentioned in this article for the vessels of the United States upon the Mediterranean.

The eighth article will probably be attended with some difficulty. If you find his most Christian majesty determined not to agree to it, you are empowered to add to it, as follows: That the United States will never be subject, or acknowledge allegiance or obedience to the king, or crown, or parliament of Great Britain; nor grant to that nation any exclusive trade, or any advantages or privileges in trade more than to his most Christian majesty; neither shall any treaty for terminating the present war between the king of Great Britain and the United States, or any war which may be declared by the king of Great Britain against his most Christian majesty in consequence of this

treaty take effect until the expiration of six calendar months after the negotiation for that purpose shall have been duly notified, in the former instance by the United States to his most Christian majesty, and in the other instance by his most Christian majesty to the United States; to the end that both these parties may be included in the peace, if they think proper.

The twelfth and thirteenth articles are to be waived if you find that the treaty will be interrupted by insisting on them.

You will press the fourteenth article, but let not the fate of the treaty depend upon obtaining it.

If his most Christian majesty should be unwilling to agree to the sixteenth and twenty-sixth articles, you are directed to consent that the goods and effects of enemies, on board the ships and vessels of either party, shall be liable to seizure and confiscation.

The twenty-fifth article is not to be insisted on.

You will solicit the Court of France for an immediate supply of twenty or thirty thousand muskets and bayonets, and a large supply of ammunition and brass field-pieces, to be sent under convoy by France. The United States engage for the payment of the arms, artillery, and ammunition, and to indemnify France for the expense of the convoy.

Engage a few good engineers in the service of the United States.

It is highly probable that France means not to let the United States sink in the present contest. But as the difficulty of obtaining true accounts of our condition may cause an opinion to be entertained that we are able to support the war on our own strength and resources longer than, in fact, we can do, it will be proper for you to press for an immediate and explicit declaration of France in our

favor, upon a suggestion that a reunion with Great Britain may be the consequence of a delay.

Should Spain be disinclined to our cause, from an apprehension of danger to his dominions in South America, you are empowered to give the strongest assurances that that crown will receive no molestation from the United States, in the possession of those territories.

You will transmit to us the most speedy and full intelligence of your progress in this business and any other transactions that it may import us to know.

You are desired to get the best and earliest information that you possibly can get of any negotiations that the Court of London may be carrying on for obtaining foreign mercenaries to be sent against these States the next campaign; and if any such design is in agitation, you will endeavor to prevail with the Court of France to exert its influence in the most effectual manner to prevent the execution of such designs.

You are desired to obtain as early as possible, a publick acknowledgement of the independency of these States on the crown and parliament of Great Britain, by the Court of France.

In conducting this important business the Congress have the greatest confidence in your address, abilities, vigilance, and attachment to the interests of the United States, and wish you every success.

To these the following additional instructions were added, soon after: —

In Congress, Oct. 16, 1776.

Whilst you are negotiating the affair you are charged with at the Court of France you will have opportunity of conversing frequently with the Ministers and Agents of other European Princes and States residing there.

You shall endeavor, when you find occasion fit and convenient, to obtain from them a recognition of our independence and sovereignty, and to conclude treaties of peace, amity, and commerce between their Princes and States and us, provided that the same shall not be inconsistent with the treaty you shall make with His Most Christian Majesty; that they do not oblige us to become a party to any war which may happen in consequence thereof, and that the immunities, exemptions, privileges, protection, defence, and advantages, on the contrary, thereby stipulated, be equal and reciprocal. If that cannot be effected, you shall to the utmost of your power, prevent their taking part with Great Britain in the war which His Brittanic Majesty prosecutes against us, or entering into offensive alliances with that King, and protest and present remonstrances against the same, desiring the interposition, mediation, and good offices, on the part of His Most Christian Majesty the King of France, and of any other States whose dispositions are not hostile toward us. In case overtures be made to you by the Ministers or Agents of any European Princes or States for commercial treaties between them and us, you may conclude such treaties accordingly.

By order of Congress.

JOHN HANCOCK, *President.*

At the same time Franklin drew and submitted to the secret committee his sketch of a proposition for peace with England. The conditions begin with this remarkable plan: —

England should renounce and disclaim all pretence of right or authority to govern in any of the United States of America. England was also to cede all her North American possessions, Bermuda, and the Bahama Islands

to the United States, with all the adjoining and intermediate territories claimed by her. In return for this cession the United States should pay —— dollars a year for —— years to England. And the United States were also to grant a free trade to all British subjects throughout the United States and the ceded Colonies, and should guarantee to Great Britain the possession of her islands in the West Indies.

Probably the first reason stated by Franklin, in his own memorandum of "Motives for proposing Peace," was the most important one in his mind in drawing this remarkable plan. If any of the commissioners should be captured at sea by a British cruiser, as very likely he himself might be, on the impending voyage, the possession of such a plan would be some protection under the law of nations, — as to an Ambassador. He suggests in this memorandum that their merchants and manufacturers need peace as much as the Americans, and that the landed interest, which then bore a large share of the expense of government, would welcome the receipt of one hundred thousand pounds a year for one hundred years. It was thus that he would have filled the blanks in his plan. He also suggests that such a plan would enable him to go to England, and use the powerful influence of his friends; and that the knowledge in France that such powers were given would help in the treaty to be made there. He also says that the United States would receive much more than one hundred thousand pounds a year from the sale of the lands which they would acquire from the treaty.

The journals, which are, however, fragmentary, do not speak of any discussion of this plan. But it cannot be doubted that, had the "Reprisal" been captured by an English cruiser, with Dr. Franklin on board, this plan would

have been found by the commander of that cruiser in the same parcel with the instructions given to the commissioners for negotiation with any sovereign in Europe.[1]

Fortified with such credentials from home, Franklin arrived in Europe. The enemies of America in England immediately spread the report that he had escaped from the ruin which was to follow his country. Some of his correspondents, as will be seen, shared in this opinion. Edmund Burke said, however, "I never will believe that he is going to conclude a long life which has brightened every hour it continued, with so foul and dishonorable a flight." This is almost exactly at the time when Burke, — if he were the author, as is supposed, of the historical review in the "Annual Register," — wrote of the opinion of the Continent, in his review of the affairs of 1776: —

"It is not a pleasing circumstance, though perhaps of no consequence, that in all the countries of Europe in which public affairs are a subject either of writing or of conversation, the general voice has been rather in favor of the Americans. Even Voltaire and Rousseau, who never agreed in anything else, are said to hold the same opinions upon that subject."

To the surprise of English observers, all nations which possessed colonies in America were eager to partake of the new and unexpected commerce which was opened by the war. The Portuguese were as eager as any other people, and were held back only by the English influence at their Court. Indeed, if it is remembered that French, Dutch, and Danish islands in the West Indies had long been supplied, as well as the English islands, with provisions, cattle, horses, and lumber from the insurgent States, — so that the very existence of their people

[1] The manuscript of this interesting paper is lost; we have the copy of it printed by Temple Franklin in 1818.

depended upon the trade with them, — it will be seen how France, Holland, and Denmark were interested in commerce with the new nation. England might be willing to have English planters starve. But it was hardly to be expected that French, Dutch, and Danish planters should be left by their own governments at home to the same fate.

If, then, Franklin brought with him from America but little immediate encouragement, he met in Europe a public opinion and certain considerations of state not wholly unfavorable to his wishes.

He arrived on the coast of France on the 29th of November. He had crossed the ocean in the sloop-of-war "Reprisal," of sixteen guns, commanded by Captain Wickes, for whom Franklin conceived a great regard. With so important a charge Wickes did not seek an encounter with enemies, but several times, when he thought there was occasion, he beat to quarters, and Franklin was pleased with his spirit and that of his men. On the 27th and 28th of November, off the French shore, he took two prizes. On the 3d of December he set Franklin on shore with his grandsons, and they landed at Auray, whence they went by post to Nantes, where they arrived on the 7th of December.

CHAPTER V.

FRANKLIN AND THE FRENCH.

ALTHOUGH, as we have seen, Louis and his ministers were hesitating, the French people were quite ready to burst into enthusiasm for America. They waited only until the arrival of Franklin to take up the cause of the "Insurgents" (as they called them) with the greatest zeal. This event caused no little sensation in France, and for the moment the attention even of the memoir-writers and letter-writers was diverted from the battles between the Glückists and the Piccinists, or the squabbles between the Chevalier d'Eon and the Sieur de Beaumarchais. "Doctor Franklin," says one, "arrived a little since from the English Colonies, is mightily run after, much fêted by the savans. He has a most pleasing expression, very little hair, and a fur cap which he keeps constantly on his head. . . . Our *esprits forts* have adroitly sounded him as regards his religion," he goes on, "and they believe that they have discovered that he is a believer in their own, — that is to say, that he has none at all." "The celebrated Franklin arrived at Paris the 21st of December," says another, "and has fixed the eyes of every one upon his slightest proceeding." All France was in truth ready to welcome him. The philosophers and scientists, his old friends of '67 and '69, greeted him again as one of themselves. The enthusiasts for the rights of man welcomed one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

The young nobility, either taken by the philosophic doctrines of the time or burning for a war of revenge with England, crowded about him beseeching for commissions to serve in the American army. Merchants and ship-captains from the seaports waited upon him with plans for fitting out privateers, or for importing tobacco at an enormous profit. It needed nothing more to set all Paris afire. Franklin and the "Insurgents" became at once the fashion. "It is the mode to-day," we read about January 11th, three weeks after his arrival, "for everybody to have an engraving of M. Franklin over the mantelpiece."

Everybody for the moment was full of Franklin, and according to the custom of the time, the clever fellows about the town, though probably caring little enough which party got the upper hand in the struggle, addressed themselves to their profession of turning out amusement for "tout Paris." Verses on the "Insurgents" were passed from hand to hand, caricatures "dans le goût Anglais" were drawn, stories and calembours about Franklin and about Lord Stormont flew about from one dinner-table to another. In fact, they hailed the occasion as rather a god-send. The winter had been a stupid one, there had been very little fun going on, and the wits were not ill-pleased to find something to turn a pleasantry or so for the edification of their circle. It was well along in February, however, before some wag concocted the following political vaudeville, — rather the best copy of verses on the subject which we have seen; of which the chronicler says with some admiration that it contains in a succinct form all the facts relative to the war. Although this is a statement which we may see reason to doubt, that it greatly amused the town and the court is not so hard to believe.

1.

"Pour amuser notre loisir
Sans blesser le decence,
Il est naturel de choisir
Ce que l'on aime en France.
Il faut donc sur un nouveau ton,
Comme notre musique,[1]
Ne parler ici que du Con-
Tinent de l'Amérique.

2.

"Qu'a donc fait certain Général
Dans cette injuste guerre?
Aux Insurgens fort peu de mal,
Beaucoup à l'Angleterre.
Ces fiers ennemis de Boston,
De honte ou de colique,
Meurent à la porte du Con-
Tinent de l'Amérique.

3.

"Il en coûte bien des écus
À plus d'un Royaliste
Le tout pour ne voir que des cus
Que l'on fuit à la piste.
Mais malgré tant d'exploits, dit on,
Le Sire Britannique
N' aura jamais un poil du Con-
Tinent de l'Amérique.

4.

"Fit on jamais en pareil cas
Plus brillante retraite;
Aussi ne le cache-t-on pas
Dans certaine gazette.
Chacun parlant du Washington
Et de sa politique
Trouve qu'il est digne du Con-
Tinent de l'Amérique.

[1] An allusion to the Glück and Piccini controversy.

5.

"Pourquoi voudroit-on abolir
Le droit de la nature ?
À Londres on fait bien jouir
Et même avec usure.
La Liberté n'est pas un don
Qu' aisément on trafique ;
Laissons en donc jouir le Con-
Tinent de l'Amerique."

There are good lines also in an "Epistle to the Insurgents," written six months later. In this there are some points of a nature deeper than mere fanciful conceit,—this, for instance: —

"Raisson nous un peu, je vous prie :
Quel droit avez vous plus que nous
À cette liberté chérie,
Dont vous paroissez si jaloux ?"

Louis XVI. could not answer this question.[1]

In the first chapter of this book we have, in brief, illustrated the hold which Franklin had early secured on the regard of the naturalists of France and the circle of political economists, whose views, really radical, gave large material for talk, even in fashionable and literary circles. Of his old friends of nine years before, most were still living and gave him a cordial welcome. His works, edited by Barbeu Dubourg, as we have seen, had been published in elegant quartos two years before his arrival as commissioner. Some of his smaller tracts had been translated, and several compilations from "Poor Richard" appeared at once after his own landing. He had been chosen into the Academy of Sciences in 1772, and now

[1] Corr. Secrète, v. 187. The "Epistle" contains also this line: —

"Rome resuscite à Boston."

This is a curious foreshadowing of the Autocrat's —

"We are the Romans of the modern world."

began to be a regular attendant. Capefigue, indeed, writing many years after, implies that he never went into Paris except to attend its meetings. But this is an exaggeration probably. In the "Annual Register," published in London this year, the historian, who is supposed to be Burke, says, with a suppressed sigh, that outside of England, the opinion of all intelligent men seems to be on the side of the insurgents. Among the correspondents of Franklin in the early years of his French life may be noted, beside the names which have been already cited, those of his neighbor, the widow Helvetius, of the Baron de Staël, the husband of Necker's daughter, of De Saussure, Rochefoucauld D'Enville, Bernstorff, J. B. Beccaria, Condorcet, Mlle. Biheron, and Turgot, — as surviving the oblivion of a hundred years, even to those who are only general readers.

At the Court, to tell the truth, the subject, as may be readily conceived, was a most delicate one. Undoubtedly the large part of the courtiers were strongly in favor of war. But Louis XVI. and his queen were for peace, and the ministry as well, — that is, for peace at present; and it would not do for the Court to adopt a warlike tone, nor one particularly sympathetic toward the insurgents. Lord Stormont was incessant in his complaints. It is said[1] that as soon as he learned that Franklin had disembarked in France he sent a note to Vergennes, threatening to leave *sans prendre congé* if the "chief of the American rebels" were allowed to set foot in Paris. Vergennes replied, with diplomatic temporizing, that the ministers had already sent a courier to meet Franklin on his way

[1] In a letter from Versailles (Corr. Secrète, iv. 69). This correspondence, written by various hands, is usually taken as authority. Having noted one or two errors, however, in ministerial rumors, we cannot be absolutely sure of its accuracy.

from Nantes, with orders to forbid him to come to Paris; "but being uncertain of the precise time of his departure, and of the route which he has taken, we cannot be sure that the intentions of the King will be carried out;" and he goes on to say that "if the Doctor were once in Paris, the Government, notwithstanding its desire to comply as far as possible with the views of the Court of London, would not like to send him away, because of the scandalous scene this would present to all France, should we respect neither the laws of nations nor of hospitality." Vergennes also ventured to conceive that a simple private individual, "almost eighty," could have but little influence on the interests of France and England.[1] The worthy minister, however, knew well just how much comfort these diplomatic phrases would bear to the British Ambassador, and, willing to go a little further in order to make it seem that France was still neutral, he forbade any conversation in the cabarets of Paris either about the insurgents or about the English. "You understand, however," remarks our authority, "that this forbidding has only the effect of kindling more zeal than existed at first."

LOUIS XVI.

Nevertheless, this much talking was in the wine-shops, and not at Court. At Court, where the desires of the King gave the sign, in public at least, and to some extent in private, the tone was very reserved. "We do not dare here at Court[2] to take part too much with the Americans,

[1] Franklin had in fact just passed seventy.

[2] That is, at Versailles.

though they do at Paris, to the great disgust of the English minister."[1] Nevertheless, the subject could not be entirely excluded. Witness the well-known *bon mot* of Count Falkenstein, the Emperor incognito. When he arrived this spring in Paris, he was asked by an incautious lady whether he sympathized with the insurgents. "Madame," said the Austrian, "it is my profession to be a royalist."

MARIE ANTOINETTE.

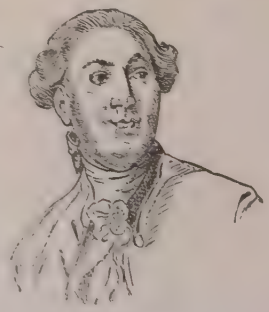
So was it the profession of Louis XVI. to be a royalist; and he had not at this time entirely conquered his prejudices against aiding a number of rebels to their King. The American cause looked dark and the British were menacing. Subsequently, when Princeton, Trenton, and Saratoga were added to the American side of the scale, he gave way to the united voice of his ministry, his court, and his people.

[1] Corr. Secrète, iv. 197. Exactly what was called "too much" by the writer cannot easily be determined. A few months before, some one had considered it not too much to permit himself to write the following verse in a species of Christmas hymn, which we are told was sung at Court shortly after the time of Franklin's arrival :—

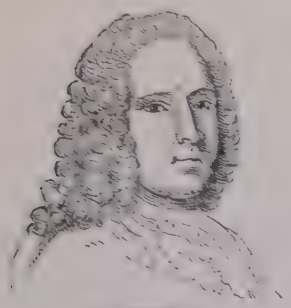
"Vergennes, gobemouche,
Ministre sans talent,
Laisse l'anglais farouche
Battre les insurgens ;
Valet bas et soumis
De toute l'Angleterre
À George III. il a promis
Qu'on serait toujours de ses amis
Pendant son ministère." [a]

[a] SOULAVIE : *Mémoires du regne de Louis XVI.* iii. 436.

But at this time, however, his ministry was decidedly averse to giving any public aid to America, and apparently very eager to show England that the friendly feelings between the old enemies were to remain unstrained through this great test of the American Revolution. Turgot was no longer in the ministry. He had been dismissed in May, 1776, — not before he had given it as his opinion that America would ultimately be free, and as his advice that Louis should not in any way assist her. His place was filled by Taboureau, and afterwards by Necker but neither of them had any very appreciable influence upon the attitude of the Court in this crisis. The two men who were the king's most trusted advisers were the Count de Maurepas, President of the Council of State, and the Count de Vergennes, Minister for Foreign Affairs. As for Maurepas, he was apparently uninfluenced by any serious considerations; he gave but little advice or counsel. What little advice he did give, influenced by his new favorite, Beaumarchais, was in the direction of secret aid rather than open alliance.



NECKER.



MAUREPAS.

Gravier de Vergennes, on the whole, held the decision of the question in his hands as far as any minister could. He was a man of great good sense, political wisdom, and of a singularly temperate nature. A hard worker, and

raised to his present high position by his own worth, after an experience in many courts of Europe, he was emphatically a man of business, a man who would look at a question calmly, wisely, from all sides, and decide it unmoved by prejudices or trifles. "Je cause avec M. de Maurepas; je negocie avec M. de Vergennes" was the *mot* of D'Aranda, the Spanish minister, who knew them both well. He was in all respects a man worthy to receive Benjamin Franklin, and the two always had for each other great respect and broad confidence.

A man like this would not be carried away by enthusiasm; nor would the plausible talk of a clever favorite urge him to do anything without consideration. Vergennes looked, reflected, and finally decided that an open alliance with America was not at that time to be desired. That decided, he applied himself with all his diplomatic skill and clever astuteness to maintain France in her anomalous position. For this purpose it was necessary that the tone of the French Court should remain very strictly neutral.

The Court policy, therefore, was not particularly friendly to Franklin in the first months of his mission. Social France received him as an idol; philosophical France welcomed him as a co-worker in a great work; military France greeted him as an ally against an old foe; commercial France at once set him down as the means of netting very considerable sums; and all alike welcomed him warmly. But the hands which swayed the political destinies of France had at this moment no welcome — that is, no open welcome — for the chief of the American rebels. So far from welcoming him, we doubt not that they wished that he had kept at home, rather than involve them in such difficulties as those that he brought with him.

We have noted in our chapter on the proceedings of Beaumarchais and Deane the sailing of Du Coudray and many more French officers for America to fight for the cause of liberty under the great Washington [1] in one grade higher than that they now enjoyed; lieutenants were to become captains, captains majors, and so on. It seemed as though half the French army wished to cross the ocean. They were most enthusiastic.

How far the desire to fight the English once more was the ruling motive, how much was real enthusiasm for a revolted people fighting for liberty, and how far it was merely the love of adventure, or the desire of bettering themselves, it is difficult to say, and perhaps unnecessary. Undoubtedly, all these incentives were influential, as well as others less apparent. There is one example, at least, of one moved by a generous feeling for an oppressed nation that will rise at once to the mind of every one. The services of the Marquis of Lafayette [2] will out-balance in the minds of Americans to-day all and more than all the annoyance and trouble caused by his less able and less worthy co-partners.

But, leaving out the few cases [3] wherein the foreign gentlemen and their companions did service for America which she could not have missed, — on the whole, this

[1] Whose name is met with in their letters to Franklin spelt in various queer ways, and notably, "Vaginsthon."

[2] Capefigue says that "it was said in the world of court and of gallantry that an exalted and unfortunate love made him quit Europe." But no one will believe this, who has read the charming love letters which he wrote to his young wife on his passage and immediately after his arrival. Capefigue also says that the discipline of the Count de Saint Germain "had so annoyed and fatigued the military spirit that many a gentleman wished to pass into the foreign service."

[3] And in these cases the service rendered was genuine, true, and of the finest quality, as any one will agree who runs over in his mind the names of Lafayette, Steuben, De Kalb, Pulaski, Kosciusko.

wholesale desire to cross to America to serve in her armies was nothing but the most frightful annoyance to Franklin on the one side of the Atlantic, and to Washington on the other. They crowded about the Doctor, clamorous for commissions; they introduced friends even when they were unacquainted with him themselves; they overpowered him with letters full of the wildest protestations of the most enthusiastic sympathy for his noble compatriots; they formed, in short, one of the worst of the myriad petty annoyances under which the worthy Doctor cheerfully bore up for several years, — as long, in fact, as the war lasted.[1]

LAFAYETTE.

And in America, if possible, matters were worse. Not six months after the "Amphitrite" and Du Coudray had reached America we find the following letter from the Secretary of Congress to Franklin: —

PHILADELPHIA, July 4th, 1777.

SIR, — I think it my duty as an individual to communicate some information to you which you may not perhaps receive in a more formal or authoritative way. The con-

[1] Franklin had countless letters from these brave officers and numberless interviews with them. Almost everybody will remember his form for a letter of introduction which he says he used to give when one person with whom he was totally unacquainted introduced another for a letter of recommendation to General Washington or to Congress. They became rather an everyday affair to Franklin. Perhaps the most curious, and one which seems to have roused the Doctor from his usual apathy, is one endorsed "from Dom Bernard Benedictine, who wants me to pay his gaming debts, and he will pray for success to our cause."

tracts made with the Cheval. De Borre, M. Du Coudray, and several more have given infinite trouble, being inconsistent with each other, and all of them, except the one you signed with four engineers, inconsistent with the honor of our American officers, who, though not formed in regular standing armies, have the most just claims from their services since the war began. It is not to be doubted but that a multitude of foreign officers, by no means deficient of merit, are willing to come over and supersede such of ours as have been constantly in the field, and have borne innumerable hardships when our poverty in arms and ammunition would have terrified the stoutest European who had been accustomed to systematic campaigns. Though we have now a standing army for three years or during the war, yet the genius of the people of these United States is far from relishing this monarchical production; so far, at least, as not to be willing, for the sake of theory, to have foreigners placed in the highest trusts.

The merit of Brigadier-General Knox is great, and he is beloved by his corps. How then could it be conceived that M. Du Coudray's treaty should not create the greatest confusion among our officers of artillery. But these are not the only ones disgusted. Numbers of our Major-Generals are injured by an antedate. The four engineers who have arrived this week disavow in the most peremptory manner being under the command of Mr. Du Coudray, who is not of the Royal Corps of Engineers. Nor is it usual or convenient that these two parties should be under the same guidance.

Mr. De la Balme may be *Inspector*-General of Cavalry without umbrage given to any of that corps.

Brigadier-General Conway resigns upon finding De Borre ranking above him. The first might be ten thousand

times more useful to us than the last. Mr. Holsendorf is a fresh embarrassment in all respects.

I much fear that an instruction formerly passed in Congress respecting foreigners who do not understand our language will be construed as a patent for those who do. It was not intended for that end, I assure you. Nothing is more dreaded than such a construction.

I will not multiply words, but conclude by assuring you of my most sincere esteem as, Sir,

Your friend and very humble servant,

JAMES LOVELL.

It is not impossible, however, that we may exaggerate this desire of the French officers to serve in the American army, — or rather, that we may imagine that there was no other feeling at the time. The other side cannot be expected to reveal itself so distinctly in Franklin's letters. Those who wished to serve in the English army did not write to ask his permission and recommendation. That there were such is not improbable. In the "Correspondance Secrète," written from Versailles in the winter of 1776, we find that "Count Bulckley has asked permission to offer his services to the King of England against the Americans. He was answered that if his father (an excellent officer) had made such a request, the King would never have consented to it; but that as for him, he might do as he liked, for nobody cared what he did." Who sent this extraordinary answer to the unfortunate Count is not stated. It is the only instance of this sort, however, that we have noted.

But, to show that the feeling of admiration and reverence for Franklin was hardly universal throughout France, let us here introduce, a little in advance of the date of its publication, the sentiments of a clever soul,

who in some fifty or sixty quatrains represents himself as having been drawn to America in search of the wonders of the Abbé Raynal's book, and who, disappointed in what he saw, roundly condemns almost everything American, Franklin included.

"Vous voyez leur mobile unique, —
Ce vieux Docteur *in partibus;*
Dont l'insidieuse rubrique
Vous échauffe de ses rebus.

"Sur l'Amérique consternée
Plaçant le bout d'un conducteur,
De l'autre a l'Europe étonnée,
Il lance le feu destructeur.

"Caméléon octogénaire,
Son esprit se ploie aisément :
De la France et de l'Angleterre
Le fourbe rit également."

In the same mood, a generation later, Capefigue, in his memoirs of Louis XVI., calls Franklin "one of the great charlatans of the nineteenth century," and in another place says that he was very much occupied with the affairs of his country and his own reputation, knowing France well, where everything "qui est charlatanisme" succeeds.

There was another direction in which sympathy for America appeared. We have glanced at the social, the philosophical, the political aspects of Franklin's arrival in France; if we look at the influence of the American war on the commerce of France, we shall see here too an immense feeling for the "insurgents," from motives of profit and loss. This is indeed one of the most important points of view from which to look at Franklin's stay in France, as well as one of the most difficult and uninteresting. We shall, as we proceed, have more or less to do with this feeling, as we go with Franklin through the time he spent

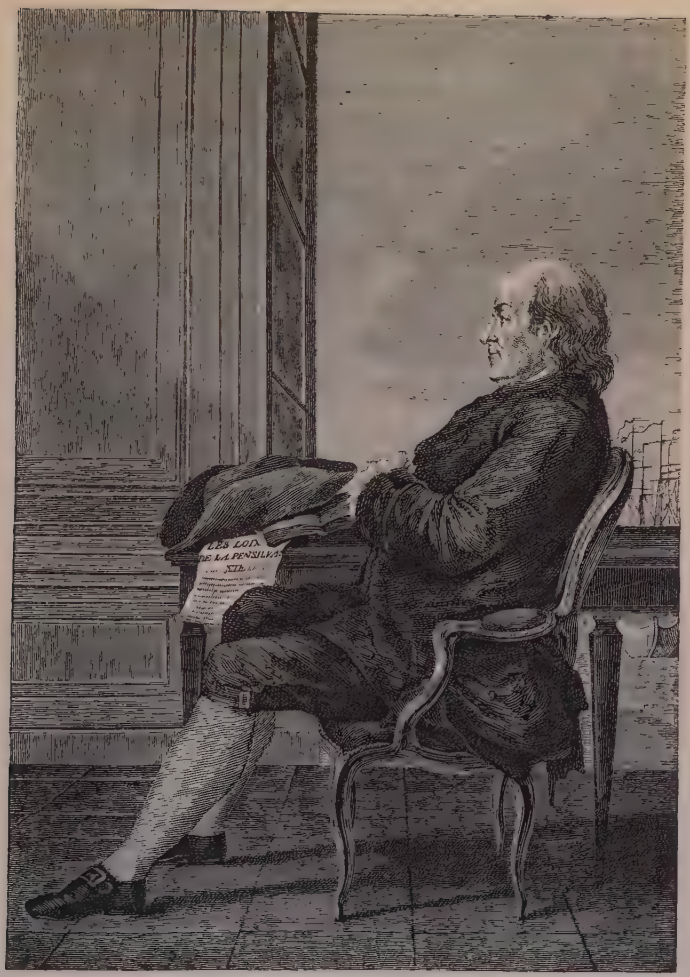
at the French Court. Here it may be enough to point out the immense profits possible in the tobacco trade, in contracting to supply the American army with military stores, and in fitting out privateers to prey upon the English commerce. "Twenty thousand hogsheads of tobacco are this instant wanted in this kingdom," writes Deane, just before Franklin arrived; and again, "Tobacco is rising very fast, being seven stivers in Holland." The trade was a lucrative one, and many were the merchants who desired to make some arrangements with the commissioners to import tobacco. So in regard to privateers. Deane had been continually demanding blank commissions, that privateers might sally forth from the French ports to prey upon English commerce. There were many and varied schemes on the carpet, — a contract with the farmers-general, for instance, for a loan to be paid in tobacco; a contract with Ray de Chaumont for establishing a line of packets between France and America; a contract with a Spanish firm for the supplying of cannon, to be repaid in tobacco (half as much tobacco again by weight as there was cannon). There were projects from Dunkirk for the building and fitting out of privateers. There were, in fact, numberless commercial schemes, many of which will come up before us as we go on. It will be enough here to point out the commercial feeling for America, — by no means so pure and uninterested as the devotion of Lafayette or the enthusiasm of Voltaire, but yet an important element in the general disposition of France.

CHAPTER VI.

PARIS REVISITED.

AFTER a diplomatic delay in the city of Nantes, while he was waiting for advices from Deane, Franklin and his party rode by post to Paris. It was in this journey, if in any, that the historian Gibbon refused to spend the evening with him at an inn, while he also was travelling. The anecdote, which has been generally circulated, is probably true. Arriving in Paris Franklin took up his quarters at the Hôtel d'Hambourg, in the Rue de l'Université, and there he remained from the 21st of December, when he arrived, for some weeks. The party then removed to the comfortable and even elegant hôtel of Monsieur Ray de Chaumont, in Passy. Passy was then rather a suburb of Paris than a part of the great city, as it is now. Fortunately for America and for the comfort of the commissioners, M. de Chaumont at this time owned the Hôtel Valentinois. In the general enthusiasm for the American cause which was felt by so many Frenchmen of high social position, M. de Chaumont pressed Franklin to come and reside in his hôtel. Franklin did so. He removed there with his grandsons, and from that time till he left France, maintained a separate establishment in a part of the hôtel, — M. de Chaumont with his family residing in another part.[1] M. de Chaumont would

[1] There is some confusion as to the exact date. Mr. Alexander, an intimate correspondent, addresses Franklin at the Hôtel Hambourg on March 7. De Saxy, writing from St. Quentin as late as March 18, addressed him at Hôtel Hambourg. Dubourg, who knew the movements of the commis-



FRANKLIN.

(From a Drawing by L. C. DE CARMONTELLE.)

"On l'a vu désarmer les Tirans et les Dieux."

never accept any rent until the independence of the United States was made sure. So far as appears, Franklin accepted this arrangement as one out of many favors which the present popularity of America won for her, — probably with no fear but that time would bring its revenges.

It will probably be a convenience to the reader if we bring together here some notes as to the domestic life of Passy through the whole of Franklin's residence there, which will in part supply the coloring, and indeed some of the lights and shades for the whole history.

The establishment which he maintained was so generous that Mr. John Adams, in a well-known letter, expostulated with him regarding it. But Franklin defended very wisely the expenditure which Mr. Adams thought profuse, and the scale of it was never changed. To a foreign minister of to-day it would not seem extravagant. He kept a carriage and a pair of horses; he had servants enough to entertain handsomely any guests whom he chose to receive. The correspondence now open to us is full of curious little notes from his more intimate friends, who avail themselves of the use of his carriage and horses, as friends will in almost any stage of civilization.

Here is, for instance, an appointment, without date, made by Madame Helvetius. The note is from the Abbé Morellet: —

sioners perfectly, wrote to the care of M. Chaumont at *Paris* on the 21st. Arthur Lee, writing from Burgos as early as March 5, addresses "Mons. Francis, dans le jardin." This is the Passy address, which, as the reader will see, had been already given to Miss Shipley. It seems therefore that the removal was probably made in the second week in March. Temple Franklin, however, says distinctly that they removed to Paris early in January. If this is not a misprint or an error in memory the business office must have been retained in the Hôtel de Hambourg till the second week in March. But even Franklin's private letters are dated at Paris until that time.

"MONSIEUR, — Mad. Helvetius learns that the Mlles. Alexander will come to ask her to dine to-day. She is engaged to dine at the Abbé Rochon's with his Sunday party, so that she will not be able to receive these ladies. She thinks that as you are at home you will come to her rescue and receive the young ladies in her place, and then she will come and join them with you after dinner. I shall have the pleasure of accepting your agreeable invitation for Monday. It is always a great good-fortune for me to see you. I am, with the most profound respect," etc., etc.

And again, from the same person, —

"My sister, my niece, and M. Marmontel, being about to go into the country for the summer, have a great desire to visit you on Sunday morning, — a day on which Madame Helvetius had asked them to dine. If you will grant them this permission, I beg you to join another kindness, which is to send your carriage only to bring them to your house. Madame Helvetius will send them if anything shall prevent you from lending yourself to this arrangement. Do me the pleasure to let me know before Sunday. You know with what satisfaction I always see you. My family joins in this and in all the sentiments of affectionate regard and respectful attachment which I have for you always. I am, with all possible devotion, Monsieur, your very humble and very obedient servant.

Thursday. If you have the goodness to send your carriage, I beg you let it be at Paris before nine o'clock."

A pleasant note from Miss Alexander asks Franklin to carry a parcel into Paris for her father. Unless he brings it in his own carriage it will be stopped at the gate of the city. This is after Franklin had the privileges of an ambassador.

William Temple Franklin, a boy in his sixteenth year when they arrived at Passy, remained with his grandfather through the whole of his residence in France, and acted strictly as his private secretary. Other gentlemen were employed from time to time in the clerical duties of the office; among others John Quincy Adams is said to have worked there with his father, when he was but eleven years old.[1]

Congress, however, which was the executive of the United States, never made any diplomatic appointment for this period, of an officer to undertake the duties which are now assigned to a Secretary of Legation. An interesting letter from Mr. Alexander, an English friend of Franklin, written on the first of March, implies that at that time at least the new "Chancelry" was not in very thorough business-like order. "Forgive me, dear Doctor, for noticing that your papers seem to lye a little loosely about your house. You ought to consider yourself as surrounded by spies and amidst people who can make a cable from a thread. Would not a spare half-hour per day enable your grandson to arrange all your papers, useless or not, so that you could come at them sooner, and not one be visible to a prying eye?" This refers to the establishment at the Hôtel d'Hambourg.

To Mrs. Juliana Ritchie, who had, apparently, addressed him in the same strain while he was still in Paris, Franklin wrote the following amusing reply: —

PARIS, Jan. 19, 1777.

MADAM, — I am much obliged to you for your kind attention to my welfare in the information you give me.

[1] We have not, however, found any handwriting which could be referred to him in the rough drafts of that period. A letter to him beginning "My dear Master Johnny" will be printed in its place.

I have no doubt of its being well-founded, but as it is impossible to discover in every case the falsity of pretended friends who would know our affairs, and more so to prevent being watched by spies when interested people may think proper to place them for that purpose, I have long observed one rule which prevents any inconvenience from such practices. It is simply this, — to be concerned in no affairs that I should blush to have made public, and to do nothing but what spies may see and welcome. When a man's actions are just and honorable, the more they are known, the more his reputation is increased and established. If I was sure, therefore, that my valet de place was a spy, as probably he is, I think I should not discharge him for that, if in other respects I liked him. The various conjectures you mention concerning my business here must have their course. They amuse those that make them, and some of those that hear them; they do me no harm, and therefore it is not necessary that I should take the least pains to rectify them. I am glad to learn that you are in a situation that is agreeable to you, and that Mr. Ritchie was lately well. My daughter and her children were so when I left them, but I have lost my dear Mrs. Franklin, now two years since. I have the honor to be, very respectfully, &c.

B. Franklin.

Very little, of course, could be expected from a private secretary who was but sixteen years old. Franklin himself was a well-trained man of business, and everything in the correspondence shows that the business of the country went systematically on. But from this time to Temple Franklin's death in 1823, he does not favorably impress the persons who followed his work as an officer of this legation, or as its historian. It seems as if he never took

any vital interest in the affairs of his country. It would be difficult to show a single detail in which he lifted a finger or spoke a word in national affairs, unless he were obliged to do so.

The details of office life and duty sometimes involved very great anxiety for all concerned. There is one period when at a time of critical interest more than twelve months passed, without their receiving any instructions from home. When instructions came they were predicated on a view of affairs which was almost antiquated when they were received; and in some instances they were written by committees of Congress, who do not seem to have known or cared what their predecessors had written. Endless embarrassments arose from the appearance of drafts on the Commissioners, which had been drawn really on no account but that of the "Bank of Hope," but which the Commissioners had to provide for, that the credit of the United States might not be dishonored.

Such was the constant danger of the capture of vessels which bore despatches, that every paper to or from Congress was copied four times. The originals always have the grim endorsement — on the outside — "To be sunk if in danger of falling into the hands of the enemy." If we may judge from the present files it would seem that these instructions had been fulfilled with more than half the papers which passed the hands of the copying clerks.[1]

There were, therefore, many periods of profound anxiety and of wearing labor during the eight years of Franklin's residence in Passy. But there were long vacations, so to speak, intermissions of anxiety and of work, when with

[1] The rates of insurance in London against captures by American cruisers were once as high as sixty per cent. At the beginning of 1777 the rate was twenty-two per cent on freight from the West Indies. The risk of capture by British cruisers was, of course, much larger.

that good-natured light-heartedness which was an essential part of his character, he was able to give himself freely to the social duties which make the most important part of the life of a successful diplomatist. At the very moment of his arrival he found himself "the rage" in Paris. He was received with the other commissioners by Vergennes, the foreign minister, as early as Dec. 23, 1776, not as ambassadors, but as gentlemen to whom Vergennes wished to show respect.

We have from the French archives the report made to the government by the police of Franklin's appearance. It is dated January 15, — three weeks after his arrival in Paris, — and is in these words: —

"Doctor Franklin, who lately arrived in this country from the English Colonies, is very much run after, and fêted, not only by the savants his confrères, but by all people who can get hold of him; for he is difficult to be approached, and lives in a reserve which is supposed to be directed by the Government. This Quaker wears the full costume of his sect. He has an agreeable physiognomy. Spectacles always on his eyes; but little hair, — a fur cap is always on his head. He wears no powder, but a neat air (*un air net*); linen very white, a brown coat make his dress. His only defence is a stick in his hand. If he sees our ministers, it is at Paris[1] at night, and in the greatest secrecy; but he has frequent conference with the Sieurs de Beaumarchais et le Rez de Chaumont. The first of these is the tou-tou of Madame de Maurepas, and probably bears some messages (le porteur des paroles)."

Our own readers will know how close were the relations of Beaumarchais both with Maurepas and Franklin.

Capefigue, in his unfriendly account of Franklin, says that "the retreat to which he condemned himself in the

[1] That is, not at Court.

village of Passy" helped to make up his reputation in a world disposed to mystery. "He shewed himself little, like all men who choose to exercise a mysterious influence." This is the bitter remark of a partisan, whose own views of government and policy had not been favored with success.

So soon as the arrival of Dr. Franklin was known in Europe, his old friends in every country addressed him. It is amusing now to see how various were their views. Ingenhausz, his scientific correspondent in Vienna, really supposed that he had come to reunite the Colonies to England. "I hope your return to our Continent has for its object the happy reunion between the mother country and the Colonies, which I so much the more hope is the case, as I know it was your constant opinion that the Colonies should keep the seat of government out of their country." The German naturalist, in his cabinet, did not understand how times had changed, — and Franklin's views with them.

A charming letter from Georgiana Shipley — afterwards the mother of the brothers Hare, so well known to the last generation of English scholars — came early in February. She even disobeyed the good Bishop of St. Asaph, her father, by writing it.

"London, February the 11th, 1777.

"After near two years had passed without my hearing anything from you, and while I looked upon the renewal of our correspondence as a very unlikely event, it is easier to conceive than express the joy I felt at receiving your last kind letter; the certainty that you are in good health and spirits, and that you still remember your English friends, is the greatest pleasure we can know during your absence. How good you were to send me your direction;

but I fear I must not make use of it as often as I could wish, since my father says it will not be prudent to write in the present position of affairs. I am not of an age to be so very prudent, and the only thought that occurred to me was your suspecting that my silence proceeded from other motives. I could not support the idea of your believing that I love and esteem you less than I did some few years ago. I therefore write this once without my father's knowledge. You are the first man who ever received a private letter from me; and in this instance, I feel that my intentions justify my conduct. But I must entreat that you will take no notice of my writing when next I have the happiness of hearing from you.

"You say you are interested in whatever relates to this family; my father, I think, was never better than he is at present, both as to his health and spirits; my mother has not been so well this last summer, but I flatter myself that she has now perfectly recovered her late indisposition. Emily has only one daughter, a charming little girl near fifteen months old, whom her aunts reckon a prodigy of sense and beauty. The rest of my sisters continue *in statu quo;* whether this proceeds from the men being difficult or from *their* being difficult, I leave you to determine. I often see many of your good friends; need I add you are the favorite subject of our conversation? they all love you almost as much as I do — as much I will not allow to be possible. Dr. P. made me extremely happy last winter by giving me a print of my excellent friend; it is certainly very like you, altho' it wants the addition of your own hair to make it complete; but as it is I prize it infinitely now the dear original is absent. Pray have you met with Smith's 'Wealth of Nations'? if not, I venture strongly to recommend it to you. I have read only parts, but propose shortly to read it regularly through. His sentiments

are liberal and the language clear and interesting. This is the only book that has been published lately worth mentioning, except Gibbon's 'History of the rise and fall of the Roman Empire.' It is written in a pleasing, elegant manner; his scheme is to unite antient and modern history, an immense work which I wish he may have application to accomplish. I have been at length fortunate enough to procure 'The Economics,' which I have read with great attention, as indeed everything else I can meet with relative to Socrates, for I fancy I can discover in each trait of that admirable man's character a strong resemblance between him and my much-loved friend,— the same clearness of judgement, the same uprightness of intention, and the same superior understanding. I dined lately with Sir Wm. Hamilton; he gave me an account of a new electrical machine invented in Italy. It is composed of beeswax, a plate of metal, and a plate of glass. They are able to take a spark from it at ten inches distance, but he could not inform me why these bodies united to produce this effect. Were you in England how happy should I be to have this as well as many other things explained by you; but I don't allow myself to entertain hopes on this subject, as I much fear there is no reason to flatter myself with so pleasing an idea. Envy is reckoned one of the foibles of our sex. Till lately I thought I was exempt from it, but now I find a strong inclination to *envy* your grandson the having it in his power to shew you any kindness and attention. Did my family know of my writing, my letter would scarce contain the very many things they would desire me to say for them. They continue to admire and love you as much as they did formerly, nor can any time or event in the least change their sentiments. My paper now reminds me that it is high time for me to conclude. Assure yourself that

every good wish for your happiness and prosperity attends you from this house. Adieu, mon cher Socrate, conservez vous pour l'amour de moi, et pour mille autres raisons, plus importans. Je ne vous en dirai pas d'avantage pour aujourdhui, mais je veux esperer de vous entretien plus à mon aise avant qui soit longue. Pray write whenever a safe conveyance offers. Since the receiving of letters is reckoned very different from answering them, I must once more repeat, nobody knows of this scrawl. 'A word to the wise,' as Richard says."

The letter is addressed, undoubtedly at Franklin's direction, to "Mons, Monsieur Francis, chez M. de Chaumont, à Passy, près de Paris." It is clear that as soon as he knew where his home was to be, he apprised those friends in Europe from whom he wished to hear. A letter from Thomas Walpole states so well the position of the friends of America in England, that we copy it as a key to the subsequent correspondence with those friends. Walpole had been closely connected with Franklin in an effort which the war broke up to organize emigration into the region bordering on Lake Erie. He was a rich London banker, and we shall meet him again. The letter, written February 1, begins with an allusion to the Erie enterprise.

"When the charges are finally settled, I shall send you an account thereof, with a credit upon some House in Paris for the balance. I hope this will be speedily, as I am, and have been for some time past, very impatient to get rid of a transaction where so many different persons are concerned, that I might be left at liberty to act for myself in it hereafter, according to my own inclination, and to the circumstances of the times.

"If Lord Chatham was in a state of health capable of comfort, I know nothing would give him so much pleasure as your testimony of his conduct on the opening of the

important crisis to which the two countries have been driven; and I will communicate to him your observation as soon as a fit opportunity offers. Lord Camden sends you his best compliments, and laments heartily with me that the restoration of peace is at so great a distance as you seem to apprehend.

"All those who are friends to both countries think they have much reason to complain of the neglect with which they have been treated by America, in not having been made acquainted in some authentic manner with her real views and circumstances at the opening of this unhappy rupture, nor with a true representation of the events which have followed; the want of which advices, it is thought, has not been less prejudicial to the reputation of America in the eyes of the rest of Europe than in the public opinion here; as the friends of both countries have thus been deprived of all means of refuting the tales which have been imposed on the world by the artifice of Administration, and which have principally contributed to the delusion of the people of England.

"But these considerations are of small importance compared to that of the Declaration of Independence, extending itself, not only to the renunciation of all allegiance, but even to all connection with this country, in preference to any other. This measure, so taken, reduced the friends to the liberties of America to the single argument of resisting the war against her upon local considerations of a ruinous expense to the nation in prosecuting a plan of conquest which, in its issue, must be considered as very uncertain; and, although we should be successful, would, probably, in its consequences, prove more burdensome than profitable. May I add, also, that shutting the door so fast against a reconciliation with this country may make American alliances with other powers more diffi-

cult or give these, at least, a considerable advantage in negotiation?

"These are the complaints of friends, and my reflections upon them; but all, I fear, too late for any useful correction or possible remedy, and all a person of my small importance in these great matters dares to add is, that he would think no office too mean, nor any endeavors above his ambition, which could tend to put a stop to our dreadful civil contentions.

"To expatiate farther upon them with you, sir, would be as if I doubted of the benevolence of your disposition being equal to your other great talents; but the contrary is so truly my opinion, that I subscribe myself, with the sincerest sentiments of esteem and affection,

Dear Sir,

Your very faithful, humble servant,

THOMAS WALPOLE."

Franklin soon established in his own house at Passy a little printing establishment, from which occasionally a tract or handbill was issued. From this press the pretended "Independent Chronicle," with an account of Indian scalping, was issued, and the little books published here are among the treasures most desired by the connoisseurs.

Immediately after Franklin and his party were settled at Passy they received encouraging news from home, from which the accounts had been very dreary until this arrival. Washington's army had been steadily retreating across New Jersey, and it was well known that it was becoming smaller and smaller. The tone of English narrative and criticism was becoming more and more exasperating. In this darkness Franklin learned through England of Washington's success at Trenton and Prince-

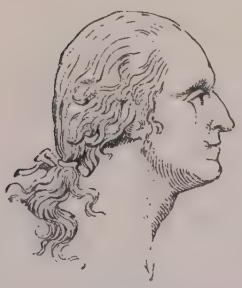
ton, in an account even exaggerated as to the English losses. In the middle of March he received the rosy account of these successes, which were sent him by the secret committee.

BALTIMORE, Jan. 9, 1777.

To the Commissioners:

GENTLEMEN,—Captain Hammond having been detained longer than we expected furnishes us with an opportunity of giving you the information we have, since our last, received from the army, through a committee of Congress left at Philadelphia, for we have yet had no regular accounts from General Washington. On the 2d instant General Washington, having received information that the enemy were on their march to attack him at Trenton, ordered two brigades of militia to advance and annoy them on the road leading from Princeton to Trenton; who, falling in with the enemy about three miles from the latter place, engaged them, but being overpowered by numbers, made a retreating fight until they joined the main body who were drawn up on the heights west of a bridge that divides the village of Trenton nearly in two parts. The enemy attempting to force the bridge were repulsed with loss by a body of men with artillery placed there to receive them. In the meantime some batteries being opened on the heights soon drove the enemy from that part of the town possessed by them. Thus the event ended for that evening. But General Washington, having received intelligence that General Howe was in person coming up to join his army with a strong reinforcement, directing fires to be made on the heights to deceive the enemy, decamped at midnight and made a forced march in order to meet M. Howe and give him battle before he joined his main body. About three miles short of Prince Town, the van of our army fell in with 600

British infantry strongly posted behind a fence and upon a hill, with artillery. They were attacked, and after a short engagement routed, having lost 200 killed and taken prisoners; among whom one colonel, one major, several captains and subalterns were slain, and about twenty officers made prisoners. The fugitives were pursued through Princetown where our army halted a while. In this affair six pieces of artillery with abundance of baggage fell into our hands. At Princetown it was learnt that General Howe was not with this party, but that he remained at Brunswick with three or four thousand men. There being a considerable force in the rear, and our men greatly fatigued with their march, and their baggage chiefly behind (it having been sent to Burlington), the General proceeded to Sommerset Court House that evening, a little westward of the road leading to Brunswick, and about seven or nine miles from that place. Here we understand he expected to be joined by a body of 1500 or 2000 fresh troops, and that his intention was to attack Mr. Howe in Brunswick.[1] On Friday morning when the enemy in Trenton missed our army, they returned toward Princetown, but it seems they left 3000 Hessians behind them; who following afterwards were so fatigued with travel and want of food that numbers were left on the road, and were straggling about the



WASHINGTON.

[1] This was Washington's intention, as all the reports say. "But his men had had no rest for two days, and after the affair at Princeton actually fell down under the influence of sleep." In the Carter-Brown library at Providence is a curious MS. note by the English General Clinton expressing the surprise of the English that this attack did not take place.

country in threes and fours. Many were taken by the country people and brought in prisoners. Many came to Trenton and surrendered themselves. The militia of New Jersey were rising generally; and it was thought few of these Hessians would get back again. This is the present state of our information and we hourly expect a well-authenticated account of the whole, and of much greater successes. We shall endeavor to give you the speediest account of what shall further come to our knowledge from good authority. The above relation is taken from a gentleman who was in the action and who, the Committee write us, is a person of sense and honor. The General has been too much engaged to write, and we suppose waits the final issue.

We most earnestly wish you success in your negotiation, and are in perfect esteem, honorable gentlemen,

B. Harrison.
R. H. Lee.

In secret Committee.

P. S. In the engagement near Princetown, we lost fifteen privates, one colonel, and Brig.-Gen. Mercer, — a very good officer and a worthy gentleman.

It seems desirable to rescue from obscurity these early narratives,[1] with all the errors as to fact which they contain, because they show the materials on which our diplomatists were forced to work, and reflect very perfectly the opinion of the best-informed people at home.

On occasions requiring haste, the Continental Congress often sent to Boston to ask the Government of Massachusetts to forward their despatches by a special packet. On

[1] The Mass. letters have not, to our knowledge, been printed. The Baltimore letter is in Lee's Memoirs.

such an occasion Franklin's old friends in the Government of that State wrote to him letters, which served him as official despatches from Congress might have done.

Such a despatch, reviewing the position of affairs, is the following letter from James Bowdoin: —

STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS BAY.
COUNCIL CHAMBER, BOSTON, February 27th, 1777.

GENTLEMEN, — We have lately received from the secret committee of Congress seven letters addressed to you, and they request that we would forward them by the quickest sailing vessel for France. In consequence of which we desired the Continental agent here with all possible dispatch to prepare one of the Continental vessels for sailing. She is now ready, and is commanded by Captain John Adams, whom we have directed, immediately upon his arrival at Nantz, to repair by post to Paris, and to deliver you the letters himself, and there receive your answer, and be governed by your directions touching his return, and the port he is to come to. We wish they may arrive in safety. If the captain should be directed to return to any of the ports in this State, we shall expeditiously forward to Congress any dispatches you may commit to our care. By the last accounts from Congress, we have the pleasure to acquaint you that they were more firmly united than ever, and that in their measures they were decisive, determinate, and very spirited. They have some time since resolved that eighty-eight battalions should be raised for the defence of the Continent, the men to serve for three years or during the war. Fifteen of these battalions are to be raised in this State as their quota; the assembly are taking every measure in their power to raise them, and hope we shall be able to complete them in season. The Congress have since agreed to

raise sixteen more battalions, and have impowered General Washington to appoint the officers. General Howe, in November and December last, knowing that the time for which our troops were engaged was near expiring, and that they would most of them be on the return home, improved this opportunity suddenly to throw his troops into the Jerseys. This manœuvre threw the people of that State into a panic. Their militia were scattered and could not be rallied. This enabled the enemy to traverse the whole extent of the Jerseys without much molestation, and obliged General Washington to return to the other side of the river Delaware. But thanks to heaven, who has remarkably interposed in our favour, the scene has greatly changed; for General Washington, having received a reinforcement in the night of the 25th of December, repassed the Delaware, attacked a large detachment of the enemy's troops at Trenton, and took most of them prisoners; and soon after, when a large body of the enemy made an attempt to dislodge him from Trenton, he in the night stole a march upon them, passed them, and attacked and drove a large detachement of the enemy from Princeton, who had began their march to join the body at Trenton. He killed several hundreds and took many prisoners and a large number of waggons. The enemy in the Jerseys are now confined to Brunswick and Amboy, and are said to be about ten thousand strong. We hear of small skirmishes every day in which our people have the advantage. We understand that great dissensions and disputes have arisen between the British troops and the Hessians For further particulars relative to the movement, operation, and state of our army and that of the enemy, we must refer you to the public prints which we herewith transmit. We esteem ourselves happy that gentlemen of such accomplishments and abilities have been

appointed to represent this Continent, at this important crisis, at the Court of France. We sincerely wish you success in your negotiation, and from your well-known attachment to the cause of America, and from the zeal, activity, and vigilance you have discovered in her service, we promise ourselves that we shall soon experience the happy fruits of your exertions. The aid and assistance of France in this country in some way or other is highly necessary. We may otherwise by a further accession of foreign troops be overborne. It is greatly probable that unless a powerful diversion prevents, the enemy the ensuing summer will have in America as great a force as with all our exertions we can possibly cope with. We are under some apprehension of General Carleton's crossing the lakes and attacking the important post of Ticonderoga, and are forwarding troops thither to strengthen the garrison. Some warriors of the Six Nations have in course of this week made us a friendly visit; and we have a good prospect of their attachment to our interest.

The Indians, likewise, on the Eastern frontiers of this State are friendly; and we have reports, attended with some degree of probability, that the mercenary troops in Canada are at variance with the British troops there.

We have just now received a letter from the commanding officer at Ticonderoga, dated the 18th inst. He writes that Cumberland Bay in Lake Champlain was still open; that two Frenchmen arrived there from Canada four days before, who bring intelligence of about one hundred Indians with a few regulars being on their march for that post, probably with a view of surprising some of our parties; and further say that the enemy are posted as follows: —

150 at Montreal, where Gen. Frazer commands;

100 at La Prairie;

200 at Chamillé, where the now infamous Gen. Paoli commands;

550 at St Johns, including sailors and marines;

300 at the Isle aux Noix, with a 12 guns redoubt;

100 at Bojor Ville; and

20 at Point au Fair. The remainder of the British troops are billeted, two or three in a house, in the vicinity of Montreal and Chamillé; and the Germans are all cantonned in and below Quebec.

By resolves of Congress transmitted to us, we observe you are impowered and requested to procure for the Continent, among other things, a great number of fire-arms. The public service requires they should be sent as expeditiously as possible, and that a considerable part of them should be appropriated to the use of this State; in which case it will be needful that such part should be directed to be brought into some of our ports.

By the return of Captain Adams and all other opportunities, we should be glad to be favored with such intelligence and information as you shall think the public service makes necessary to be communicated.

JAMES BOWDOIN, *Presid.*

The following are from Rev. Samuel Cooper and Prof. John Winthrop. Cooper was ridiculed in the English ballads as "silver-tongued Sam;" he was the minister of Brattle St. Church. He deserves to be called a statesman for the breadth and intelligence of his views. He was afterwards in official correspondence with the French government; and one, at least, of his sermons — that on the constitution of Massachusetts — was widely circulated in Europe in different languages. The other letter is from John Winthrop. He was Professor of Natural Philosophy in Harvard College.

Boston, N. E., Feb. 27, 1777.

My Dear Sir, — I wrote you some time ago, acknowledging the receipt of your kind letter, dated from Philadelphia 25th Oct. last, the day you embarked for Europe, and read your affectionate leave to all our friends. We often think and talk of you, and constantly follow you with our best wishes. I have lately heard with particular pleasure of your safe arrival in France, where I know you meet with many friends, and where all orders of people will treat you as you deserve; and I can wish you nothing better. May heaven preserve your life and health for the sake of your country, for which I know your wishes are at least equal to your abilities.

"Oh! save my country, Heaven, will be your last."

You will doubtless have heard before this can reach you — perhaps already, from those who can best inform you — of the happy change in the face of our affairs since the 26th of Dec. last.

When our army was wasted greatly, when what remained was upon the point of dissolution, the time of enlistment being expired, when Gen. Lee, upon whom we placed large hopes, was snatched from us, when Washington, whose prudence and firmness can never be too much applauded, was driven with his handful of men through the Jersies, beyond the Delaware, when every thing upon which the states depended for the winter's defence seemed to fail, — then a kind Providence, in whose blessing in so righteous a cause you expressed so firm a dependence, signally interposed on our behalf. Washington was animated to form a great and daring design, considering his circumstances. He attacked the conquering and pursuing army. He saved Philadelphia. He almost instantly cleared the West Jersies. He revived

the spirits of the states, though they remained firm at the most pressing season, almost beyond example. Since which, the British forces and their auxiliaries have been cooped up at Brunswick and Amboy by scarcely anything more than a militia, inferior even in numbers.

Desertions from the enemy are now frequent. They are straitened for provisions and forage. Alarms and fatigues and sickness have worn their men and impaired their number.

Frequent skirmishes, in which we have constantly had the advantage, have done the same. A large foraging party, that lately ventured but a little way from Brunswick, have been drove back with precipitation and considerable loss. The states are now engaged in forming their new army. There are difficulties, but not, we hope, insurmountable. Washington begins to receive in considerable numbers the new levies. Those from this quarter, that are first in readiness, march to Ticonderoga. The lake has not yet been frozen over, and it is believed we are for the present safe on that side. Will France let such an opportunity for her own advantage slip out of her hands? Can Britain give her an equivalent for the independence of these states? Will the House of Bourbon not exert itself to prevent any more foreign troops from coming to America? Can we have no men-of-war to open our ports and trade, and secure our most necessary supplies? Will not France employ its influence in Canada, and on the foreigners that are here? Many of them have already mutinied at New York, and are confined in jails and guard-ships, or disarmed, or very narrowly watched by Britons. We have reports of the same kind from Canada.

Adieu, my dear sir; for having such short warning of this opportunity, I write in haste and fear of missing it.

Remember me to any friend you see where you now are. Every blessing attend you. Pray write me.

With the greatest esteem and attachment,

Ever yours, SAM'L. COOPER.

The second letter is from John Winthrop: —

CAMBRIDGE, N. E., Feb. 28, 1777.

DEAR SIR, — I do most sincerely congratulate you on your safe arrival in France. Though nothing ever gave me greater pleasure than to hear you had undertaken a commission in which America is so deeply interested, and which could not well have been executed without you, yet, I must own, I was in great pain for your safety in so long a voyage, and exposed as you were to peculiar danger from the enemy. The firmness of mind and ardent love of your country manifested on this and every other occasion must endear you to every American, and lay this continent under obligations that can never be forgot. May the same gracious providence which has hitherto protected you succeed all your exertions in the glorious cause of liberty. We promise ourselves everything from your abilities and influence in the Court of France, and hope they will pursue such measures as will effectually disconcert the plans of our enemies; certainly they never had so fair an opportunity of depressing and weakening their great rival. This seems to be the critical moment for them to step in; and if they act from national views, and with their usual policy, I should think they would not let it slip.

I have taken the liberty to enclose a letter to Dr. Price, upon a particular affair that he is solicitous about, and beg you will be so good as to forward it.

I frequently entertain myself with the pleasing hope that you will ere long return to America, and have the

high satisfaction of seeing your country flourish, under your auspices, in freedom and independence; and that the circle here whom you have honored with your friendship will again be happy in your company.

The council write you by this conveyance so fully on the present situation of our affairs that I have nothing to add.

With every sentiment that gratitude and respect can inspire, I am, &c., &c.,

JOHN WINTHROP.

It will be interesting to see at the same time by what views the French Cabinet was guided in its first interviews with Franklin. Of the papers submitted to it at that time, all the more important have probably been preserved in the French archives. There are now to be found in those collections five papers of dates between the time when Franklin sailed and the 1st of April, 1777, which were evidently drawn for the instruction of the ministers.

On the 11th of September, there is a paper entitled "Problem touching the American Colonies." It is argued, first, that it is for the interest of France that the Colonies should become an independent power; second, that France should not maintain a neutrality in the contest. A short memoir is attached to this article.

On the 2d of October, there is "A view of some of the special motives which ought to induce France to form an alliance with the new American Republic." The subject is treated principally in a commercial point of view.

The next is, "Considerations on the legitimacy of the succors which foreign powers may render to the English American Colonies," — a long and a very able article by Pfeffel, an eminent jurist. The subject is examined on the ground of justice, history, and the laws of nations.

His argument is summed up in five points, in which he considered the position established that France and Spain may lawfully render assistance to the Colonies in their contest with England.

On the 5th of January, 1777, "Reflections on the necessity of rendering aid to the Americans in the war with England," — a political discussion of the subject, apparently drawn up by one of the ministers.

In the same month, "Considerations of a Frenchman on the insurgents in America," — written apparently by a military officer.

January 7, 1777, "Reflections on the state of American affairs," — a well-written paper on the actual state of things and their political bearings. It maintains the position that France ought to aid the Colonies against England.[1]

[1] These memoranda of the contents of these papers are those made by Mr. Sparks, and left by him in manuscript.

CHAPTER VII.

LAMBERT WICKES AND GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM.

THE worthy Captain Wickes, who commanded the ship wherein Franklin came to France, employed himself at once in refitting the "Reprisal," in disposing of his captured cargoes, and in securing his prisoners, who, as he was pleased to think, would serve to rescue many of his countrymen from English prisons. Of that, more hereafter. He was also busy in examining ships. Ships were to be bought for the American navy, and Captain Wickes, intent on making himself serviceable to his country, made the rounds of the seaports of France and examined such likely ships as he heard of, whether on the stocks or already launched. While occupied in this, he appeared at Nantes at about the time that the great ship of the firm of Rodrique Hortalez & Co., the "Amphitrite," had put in, after leaving Havre, as will be remembered, on account of General du Coudray, who was displeased with his accommodations. Wickes, who had a clearer idea of the necessities of the American service than Silas Deane or Beaumarchais, gave the artillerist a bit of good advice. "Leave some of your officers behind," was the counsel of the sea-dog; "they don't want 'em over there." But Du Coudray did not follow his advice; so Wickes was unable to stop what became, as has been seen, a very fruitful source of trouble to the American cause.

He did good service, however, in examining ships. At Nantes he met with a sixty-gun ship, which he examined

with interest. But he reported to Franklin that it was unsuitable for American waters, — too deep in draught. Other ships, too, he examined, and of each he wrote a report to Franklin. Indeed, it would seem as though that gentleman, to understand all the particulars of the letters with which the captain favored him, must have used his late sea-voyage to great advantage in acquiring an extensive knowledge of maritime affairs. The questions which were occurring every day were such as required the greatest knowledge, prudence, and decision, to be sure of a satisfactory settlement, and though much was mismanaged and many events turned out unsatisfactorily, yet when we consider what numbers of important questions turned up, we are more inclined to wonder that everything did not go to ruin. There was, at once, question of the purchase of ships-of-war, of officers to command them, of sailors to make up the crew, of merchants to fit them out, of cannon and stores to be bought, of cruises to be made when the ships had got to sea. The Commissioners, none of them previously famous for their knowledge of maritime affairs, had to constitute themselves into a Navy Department, which was to make something out of almost no resources at all. And not only were there questions of this sort, but questions of a far more intricate and difficult nature, which even Captain Wickes could not clearly comprehend, — questions of really far more importance, for they affected the position of France as a neutral power between the two belligerents. Were American ships-of-war and privateers to be allowed in French ports? Could they issue forth from such ports, make prizes, return to these same or other neutral ports safe from the enemy's fleet, and sell their prizes to the highest bidder? Could the American cruisers capture English seamen, carry them into French ports, confine them in French prisons, and

finally exchange them for as many American prisoners in England, who, on being exchanged, at once should step on board the privateers which the French merchants were fitting out with American commissions under American colors? These were questions of much importance. Wickes evidently thought that every one of them should be solved in the affirmative. According to public international law, as understood to-day, every one of them would be answered in the negative. But France was friendly to America, and though Lord Stormont was loud and continual in his really just complaints at the gross breach of neutrality by France, that country remained for a year or more in this peculiar position. American cruisers were constantly to be found refitting in French ports. As constantly were they ordered out of them at twenty-four hours' notice. Then a letter was sent to Franklin, who was to write to Vergennes for some sort of permit, — it mattered not just what sort; time was gained, the refitting was completed, and the cruiser sailed out, captured prizes, and put into France again, where they were sold; and then the same thing occurred over again. The "Alabama" question was no new thing in history.

As we say, Wickes thought, evidently, that all this questioning was absurd. He seems to have found it impossible to see why, if France was a friend to America, American vessels could not fit out in her ports. In truth, the position of France was not justifiable; it could not be maintained; and naturally, though not so quickly as might have been thought, she drifted into open war.[1]

[1] "Your friends are neither just or reasonable, if they complain of the bounds that it is necessary to set to the enterprises of the privateers. . . . We have exerted a patience which they had no right to expect. . . . We cannot allow the privateers of any nation whatever to come in and go out

Our readers will gain the best view of these maritime affairs if they read for themselves the letters of this energetic sea-captain, and see what things were happening in the French seaports in these months of the winter, spring, and summer of the year 1777. He will also see what sort of work was expected of the Commissioners at the Court of France, — not the most important part of their work, but one of the details.

NANTES, January 14th, 1777.

GENTLEMEN, — I have been waiting ever since I wrote you last for the inventory of the St. John, and have not received it yet, [and] therefore conclude M. Gourlade[1] has sent it forward for Paris. Capt. Nicholson arrived here yesterday, and produced your instructions to him concerning the visiting and inspecting the ships at L'Orient. But I think I have done everything that Capt. Nicholson could do was he to go there, [and] therefore have considered that it is better for Capt. Nicholson to return immediately to Paris, and there to assist you in pointing out the deficiencies of stores and materials, agreeable to inventories. I think you had best get Capt. Nicholson to make what addition he may think needful or necessary to the inventories, and agree with these gentlemen to furnish all stores and material and fit the ship out fit for sea, as it will be in their power

of our ports as they would their own. This is a duty imposed on us by treaties. Neither can we permit the sale of prizes. In every other respect we have shown the greatest compliance; we have even gone further than was reasonably to be expected." — Vergennes to Grand, Aug. 21, 1777, Dip. Cor.

[1] Mr. Gourlade was a merchant at the port of Morlaix, recommended to Franklin by Wickes as being a good man to transact business with. He was the partner of Mr. Moylan, and with these two as well as with the firm, Franklin had constant dealings.

to do it much cheaper and quicker than we could possibly do it ourselves. My reason for mentioning this matter is that it may be conducted with more secrecy than it could be done, provided Capt. Nicholson or myself was to attend the fitting this ship, as they have spies in every port who would give immediate information to the Court of Britain, whom we may reasonably suppose would give orders for blocking her up, thereby rendering her useless. I beg leave to recommend Capt. Nicholson to your notice as a Gentleman of good family, who has been regularly bred to the Sea, and think him well qualified to command a ship-of-war. He was very active in the beginning of our unhappy difficulties in his country's cause, and continued so until the necessities of his business obliged him to go to London, where he has been ever since idle for want of employment. This inconveniency I hope you'll soon remedy by employing him in the service of the United States of America, and thereby put it in his power to make good his lost time. As Capt. Nicholson will be there to assist you, I hope it will not be necessary for me to come to Paris. I am now all ready fitted for sea, only waiting to be informed by you whether our prizes will be received and protected in French ports or not, as I may take my measures. Accordingly you'll please inform of this as soon as possible, as I only wait your orders and answer to this, and then proceed on a cruise immediately. I should be much obliged for all other necessary information in your power. I remain, with much respect, gentlemen,

Your most obliged humble serv't,

LAMBERT WICKES.

P. S. If you think it necessary I should come to Paris, I will set off immediately on receiving your orders.

L. W.

What information was sent him in regard to prizes in French ports can only be conjectured. He sailed on a cruise and returned with booty, as we shall see.

PORT LEWIS, Feb'y 14th, 1777.

GENTLEMEN, — This will inform you of my safe arrival after a tolerable successful cruise, having captured 3 sail of Brigs, one snow, and one ship. The Snow is a Falmouth Packet bound from thence to Lisbon. She is mounted with 16 guns, and had near 50 men on board. She engaged near an hour before she struck. I had one man killed. My first Lieut. had his left arm shot off above the elbow, and the Lieut. of Marines had a musquet ball lodged in his wrist. They had several men wounded, but none killed. I am in great hopes that both my wounded officers will do well, as there are no unfavorable symptoms at present. Three of our Prizes are arrived, and I expect the other two in to-morrow. As I am informed that there has been two American Private ships of war lately taken and carried into England, I think it would be a good opportunity to negociate and exchange prisoners, if it could be done, but I submit to your better judgment to act as you think proper. I should be very glad to hear from you as soon as possible, and should be much obliged if you would point out some line or mode to proceed by in disposing of prisoners and prizes, as nothing will be done before I receive your answer to this. I hope you 'll excuse my being more particular at present, from, Gentlemen,

Your most obliged h'ble serv't,

LAMB'T WICKES.

A list of the vessels and cargoes taken, viz. : —

No. 1. A brig from Pool [1] bound to Cadiz, with a cargo of codfish.

2. A brig, with wheat and flour, from Dublin bound to Lisbon.

3. A brig from Shetland, with barley, bound to Cadiz.

4. Swallow packet, bound from Falmouth to Lisbon, in ballast.

5. A ship from Bordeaux bound to Londonderry with brandy, claret, and hoops. Three of those are arrived, and the other two are not far off.

L. W.

L'Orient, Febr'y 26th, 1777.

Gentlemen, — I have this day received very extraordinary orders from the intendant of this port, demanding me to leave this port in 24 hours. He says this order is given in consequence of a positive order received this day from the minister at Paris. I asked liberty to heave down my ship, and repair her on my arrival; but it has never been granted. On being told that I must positively depart in 24 hours, I told the intendant that it was not in my power to depart in so short a time, as my ship was not fit to proceed to America without heaving down and repairing; and begged he would send carpenters off to examine the ship, and take their report accordingly. This he consented to, and sent them off. They returned and told the intendant that they thought highly necessary to careen and repair the ship before she departed for America. He then positively refused to grant me liberty to refit, unless the carpenter and caulkers would sign a certificate that we should be in imminent danger of losing the ship if not repaired. This certificate they could not

[1] Liverpool. This city may be found as the Pool, on Continental maps as late, at least, as 1807.

sign, as they had not been to sea in the ship, and it was not in their power to see the ship's bottom without heaving her down. He then told me I must depart immediately. We are now taking our water on board and getting ready to proceed, but I shall not be able to sail before Friday, the 28th, in the evening, and am in hopes I shall have the pleasure of receiving your orders and instructions on this head before that time; but if obliged to depart sooner, or before I receive your orders, I shall run into Nantes, and there enter a protest, and ask liberty to heave down and repair, though I am ordered by the intendant not to go into any port in France. These are very extraordinary orders, such as I little expected to receive in France. I beg leave to congratulate you on our late success in America, as I am informed we have gained a very signal and complete victory over our enemies at Trenton. You 'll see by my declaration made on my arrival, that I then mentioned my ships being leaky, and begged liberty to heave down and repair. If this favour cannot be granted, as it is absolutely necessary prior to my departure, I should be much obliged if you would forward your dispatches, and send me off for America as soon as possible. From, Gentlemen,

Your most obliged h'ble serv't,
LAMB'T WICKES.

L'ORIENT, March 3d, 1777.

GENTLEMEN, — I received yours of the 23d Feb'y by Mr. De Francy,[1] which I am sorry came so late, as the vessels are all gone. He will soon return, when I shall give you as full an answer as I can to all your proposals. We have got up to the place of careening, and are now

[1] De Francy was in the employ of Beaumarchais, who probably had a good deal of business at the seaports at about this time.

preparing for that business. Time is now our own, and you may order or dispose of us as you think proper.

From, Gentlemen, your most obed't h'ble serv't,

LAMB'T WICKES.

The carpenters had come aboard again, and signed the required paper, whereupon permission to careen was granted.

L'ORIENT, 5th March, 1777.

GENTLEMEN, — I received two of yours of the 25th by Mr. De Francy, who I am sorry came so late, as our sales were complete before his arrival. I have strictly attended to your proposals, and shall give you as full an answer as in my power. As to cruising in the Sound for the Baltic ships, I am afraid that will not do; as neither I nor my officers are acquainted with those seas, nor have we any proper charts for those seas. Another objection is the certainty of being soon discovered, as there is such numbers of vessels passing and repassing continually; the consequence of which would be dangerous, as the passages in and out are narrow, and we should be either blocked in or taken. But if you should think proper to order us on this expedition, I think it would be highly necessary to procure us admittance and protection in some of the principal ports in those seas. If this cannot be done, I think it would not be advisable to venture there. The coast of Guineay I think much safer and better; but there are such difficulties attending it as cannot be got over. Our ship will not carry water and provision enough for the cruise, as it will be necessary to take four months' water and provisions for that cruise, and we cannot take more than two months' water and provisions. If you should purchase the "Maurepas," I think this cruise would then

be advantageous, as the ships of war are small that are on that coast, and the Guineay men, though they have all more or less guns, are not in a condition to fight, as their men are generally very sickly going off the coast. I join with you in sentiments in regard to cruising on this coast, as there is very little prospect of any more success here. I am informed by the officers belonging to the French ships of war that arrived here two days ago from a cruise, that there are three British ships of war cruising between Cape Finisterre and Ushant, one of 64 guns, one of 50, and one of 32 guns, two of which they saw, and were told there was another. The French ships go out again on a cruise to-day. I think if a very fast-sailing cutter could be got, and stationed at Dunkirk, they might soon make plenty prizes by running into the Downs, and cutting ships out from there; provided they would be received and protected in that port, untill it suited you to send them off for America or elsewhere; and take liberty to recommend Capt. Hinson for that service, as he is a stout, brave man, and I think well qualified for such an enterprise. I am very glad to hear you intend to provide for Capt. Nicholson, as I think him deserving your confidence, and make no doubt he will merit your esteem in any station you may think proper to place him. If you purchase the "Maurepas," and I am appointed to command her, I know no obstacle in Capt. Nicholson's way, as my officers would chuse to continue with me, and, of course, there will be room for him in the "Reprisal." I think you may get the "Maurepas" for 12,500£ sterling. She is a very fine ship, and has the character of a very fast sailer. I would recommend her purchase, if convenient. Whatever may be the determination on these hints mentioned in your last, I shall cheerfully comply [seal] with any orders from you, if in my power, the officers [seal] not

to sign a written parole, or give their word of honour. As I have wrote you fully on this head, shall only say they are all discharged.

From, Gentlemen,

Your most obliged humble servant.

P. S. I shall take care not let any more officers on shore at all.

L. W.

L'Orient, March 15th, 1777.

Gentlemen, — I wrote you last post, informing you of my disagreeable situation.[1] Also mentioned the proceedings of Mr. Gonnett, the Commissary of this Port. He still continues to threaten to drive me out immediately. If the threats and abuses of this busy person cannot be stopped, I should be much obliged for your instructions, and am in hopes you 'll either dispatch me immediately for America, or procure me admittance in some other port, where I shall be better received and kinder treated than I have been here. You may rest satisfied that no proceedings of mine have meritted Mr. Gonnett's treatment, as I have always behaved with all the complaisance in my power to that gentleman, which I am afraid will be out of my power to continue longer, as it vexes me very much to be treated in this manner, and I would not submit to elsewhere. Please let me know what news there is from America.

From, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient h'ble serv't,

Lamb't Wickes.

[1] This letter, dated March 13, relates how he received orders to leave the port at twenty-four hours' notice.

On account of this order from the commissary of L'Orient, Wickes sailed for Nantes, but shortly returned to L'Orient.

L'Orient, 25th April, 1777.

Gentlemen, — I left Nantz Wednesday evening to come here, and by a letter from you and one from Capt. Johnston, I find he arrived at Nantz. Soon after my departure I returned an answer to Capt. Johnston, and desired him to come immediately and join me, but have since received a positive order from the Commissary of this port to depart the port in 24 hours. In consequence of those orders I write by this evening's post, desiring Capt. Johnston to join me at St. Auzeau as soon as possible. As Capt. Nicholson is not yet ready, I think it will be the best place to meet and depart from. You may depend on my utmost attentions to your orders, and make no doubt we shall be able to give you satisfaction if we are not taken. There is three British ships of war cruising in the bay, which have been seen last Monday evening. A prize sloop arrived here yesterday, taken by Capt. Thompson of the Brig "Rising States" from Boston. This was the third prize taken by her since her departure from America. This prize is from Lisbon bound to London, loaded with fruit and wine. I shall leave this port, if the wind and weather permits, and go immediately for St. Auzeau, where I shall inform you of my further proceedings.

From, Gentlemen, &c., &c.,

Lambert Wickes.

L'Orient, April 27th, 1777.

Gentlemen, — I wrote you last post, acknowledging the receipt of your letters by Capt. Johnston, and informing you of my intentions to proceed to Nantz, and

there wait the arrival of Capt. Johnston. I am very sorry to inform you of the mutiny that has happened among my people since my arrival. They have all refused to go to sea until they received their prize money. With much threats, and a promise that the prize money should be paid before they left Nantz, I have prevailed on them to go to Nantz, but do not expect to get them from there till they are paid, as the time they shipped for was one year, which is now expired. I hope you 'll be punctual in giving orders to Mr. Morris for paying them as soon as they arrive, in order to prevent delays. I think this will be necessary in order to prevent any dispute between me and Mr. Morris. The people have promised to continue in the ship, and behave well, provided they receive their money, and if not, I shall be under the disagreeable necessity of proceeding directly to America with a few of the people I can get to go with me, which will not exceed 30 or 40 men. I have this day received my certain orders from Mr. Gonnett, commissary of this port, ordering me out this day, and not to offer to cruise or make any prizes on the French coast on any pretence whatever. These orders were handed me to sign, which I refused to do; and told the Commissary I would comply with them as far as was consistent with my orders from the Honorable Continental Congress of the United States of America. I told him that I never had cruised on the coast of France, or made prizes on said coast, nor would I do it. I should be glad of your advice on these different subjects as soon as possible.

I also take this opportunity to recommend Mr. Gourlade to your honours' particular notice, and think him worthy of your utmost confidence, and hope for the future you will render him every service in your power, as he has been very active in rendering me every service in his

power. I have made him my confident in regard to prizes and the signals to be made by them agreeable to a request in a paragraph of your last letter to me. If they should fall in here I make no doubt but that he will do everything in his power to give you satisfaction, and hope you will favor him with your instructions in regard to the sale of the prizes that may come in here. Mr. Gonnett's orders was in writing that he wanted me to sign; but I told him I could not sign them or receive orders from him or Mr. Sartine or any other person except the Hon'ble Congress or their Commissioners. I imagine you 'll hear this from the minister at Paris, which makes me more particular in my answer. From, Gentlemen, &c.,

L. W.

P. S. If you should have any other business to transact I think Mr. Gourlade the most proper person you can employ at this port. I have had occasion to take money of Mr. Gourlade to pay the ship's disbursements, and he would have advanced the money to pay the people, but I did not like to give him a bill for so large a sum without your orders.

L. W.

By this time, however, the "Reprisal" was ready for sea, and Wickes, tired of dodging from one port to another, sailed off on a cruise, this time in company with Nicholson on board the "Dolphin," and Johnson with the "Lexington."

St. Malo, June 28th, 1777.

Gentlemen, — This will inform you of my safe arrival at this port yesterday, in company with Capt. Samuel Nicholson of the sloop Dolphin. We parted from Capt. Johnson the day before yesterday a little to the

east of Ushant. Now for the History of our late cruise. We sailed in company with Captains Johnson and Nicholson from St Nasair[1] May 28th 1777. The 30th fell in with The Fudrion[2] about 40 leagues to the west of Bellisle, who chased us, fired several guns at the Lexington, but we got clear of her very soon, and pursued our course to the N° West in order to proceed round into the North Sea. On our way thither we brought to several French, Portuguese, and Dutch vessels, all of which we let go as soon as we found who they were. Nothing more happened till we arrived off the North end of Ireland, June 19th, when we took two Brigs and two Sloops; one of each we sunk, the other, a small smuggling cutter, we let go, and the other, a Brig from Newry, sent into port in ballast. 20th took the sloop Jassans from White Haven, bound to Petersburg in Ballast; sent her in. 21st took Scotch ship from Prussia bound to Liverpool loaded with wheat; took a small Scotch smuggler and sunk her. 22nd took the John and Thomas from Norway bound to Dublin loaded with deals, the Brig Jenny and Sally from Glasgow bound to Norway in ballast. Sent them forward. 22d took a Brig from Dublin bound to Irwin; sunk her. Took three large Brigs loaded with coals from Whitehaven bound to Dublin; sunk them in sight of that Port, after taking all the people out of them. Took the Brig Crawford from Glasgo bound to St. Ubes in Ballast. 23d took the ship Grace, from Jamaica bound to Liverpool, loaded with sugar, rum, cotton and tobacco, and the Brig Peggy, from Cork bound to Liverpool, loaded with Butter and hides, and sent them forward. 24th at 8 p.m. gave the Brig Crawford to the Prisoners and sent them forward to Whitehaven. We stood down the Irish Channel. 25th took the sloop John and Peter from

[1] Same as St. Auzeau. [2] Foudroyante.

Havre de Grace bound to Dungarvan in Ballast; gave them their vessel and let them go. This day we passed between Scilly and the Land's End. 26th at 4 p.m. took a snow bound from Gibraltar bound to London loaded with Cork; sent her forward. At 6 a.m. saw a large ship off Ushant; stood for her at 10 a.m.; discovered her to be a large ship of war standing for us: bore away and made sail from her. She chased us till 9 p.m. and continued firing at us from 4 till 6 at night; she was almost within musket shot, and we escaped by heaving our guns overboard and lightening the ship. They pay very little regard to the laws of neutrality, as they chased me and fired as long as they dared stand in for fear of running ashore.

As I shall be under the necessity of getting the ship refitted here, I hope you will furnish me with a credit for what money I want here, as soon as possible. We can get supplied with guns and everything necessary on tolerably easy terms. I am in hopes you 'll soon hear of Captain Johnston's arrival as I saw him clear of the ship that chas'd us. I think you had best sell the cutter and purchase some other vessel for Capt. Nicholson, as she is only a pickpocket and will want a heavy repair if fitted out again for another cruise. I shall look out and see if there is any vessel in this port fit for a cruiser. If I should find one, will let you know. As I had not the pleasure of knowing Captain Johnston[1] before, I could not give him a character sufficient to his merit; and now beg leave to recommend him as a very brave, active officer, and worthy your honours' utmost attention. The prizes is sent into l'Orient, Nantz, Bilbao, or St. Sebastian's, or the first port they can reach.

from, Gentlemen, &c., L. W.

[1] Johnson arrived in the "Lexington" at Morlaix, July 1, 2, or 3.

St. Malo, July 13th, 1777.

Gentlemen,— I received your favour of the 4th instant ordering me to send our prizes to the address of Mr. Williams at Nantz and give orders to our prize masters accordingly. This order will be cheerfully complied with by me. I should be very glad to know my future destination, and whether I am to go out as soon as fitted for sea, as I am told the ministers has ordered me out of Port. I shall get my guns on board and proceed to sea as soon as possible unless ordered to the contrary. Three of our people have run away, and carried off a French pilot boat, which they say I must pay for. Please advise me on this head. I have wrote Captain Johnston desiring him to address his prizes as you direct, and have also communicated said orders to Captain Nicholson. As the Dolphin is at present disabled in her mast I don't think it prudent to send Capt. Nicholson and his officers to Nantz in her, as she is very dirty and cannot escape if chased. It will be attended with very little expense to send her round as French property, and may be done by Capt. Nicholson's own French hands now on board, only shipping a French captain and clearing her out as French property, for which a bill of sale may be given to Messrs. De Segray and Co. Please inform us how you would have this matter conducted and depend on our compliance from &c., &c.

L. Wickes.

In the next letter is a reminder of the immense numbers of volunteers for America who were boring the life out of the Commissioners.

"This letter," says Wickes, "will be made use of merely as an introduction to your acquaintance,— as this gentleman has no favours to ask, and will not be among the

number of your American adventurers, as he is well provided for in France, and has no thoughts at present of going to America."

St. Malo, 12th Aug. 1777.

Gentlemen, — This will inform you of my present unhappy situation. The Judges of the Admiralty have received orders of the 6th inst. from the Minister at Paris, ordering them not to suffer me to take any cannon, powder, or other military stores on board, or to depart from this port on any consideration whatever without further orders from Paris. In consequence of these orders they came on board on Saturday to take all my cannon out and to unhang my rudder. I have prevented this for the present by refusing to let them take rudder or cannon without producing an order from the minister for so doing. As I told them, my orders corresponded with theirs in regard to continuing in port, but I had no order to deliver anything belonging to the ship to them, which I could not do without orders, and if the ministers insisted on it, made no doubt but you would give your orders accordingly, which would be readily complied with on my part when such orders were received. My powder is stopped, and they have been contented by taking my written parole not to depart until I receive their permission. I am told they have wrote to the minister informing of my having taken my cannon on board clandestinely at the night. If so, you may safely deny the charge, as I took them on board at noonday, publickly, and did not think I was to be called to an account for it, as I was told that I might go on and get my ship fitted for sea as fast as possible, in order to be ready to proceed on the arrival of my orders and permission from Paris, which it was supposed would come together. Please give me your sentiments on these subjects as soon as possible, that I

may act conformably to them. This will be delivered you by Mr. Et De Landrais Lebire, a partner of the house of Messrs. Le Breton, De Blisson, Et De Landrais Lebire, a very reputable house in this place, who will enter into contract for supplying you with any quantity of large cannon, anchors, sailcloth, and cordage you want. As these gentlemen have now got at the port of L'Orient two 64 gun ships, 4 or 5 of 40 guns, which they propose to employ in exporting those articles to America, I think a contract with them will be more advantageous than with anybody else in this country, but submit it to your superior judgement. They tell me they can get these goods shipped and ready to export by the Month of October. These ships well manned will be able to fight their way through any of the enemies squadrons in America. As my situation in France is more disagreeable than ever, I hope you'll get permission as soon as possible for me to depart, as I am now ready for sea, and have nothing to take on board but my powder. I received yours of the 5th instant, and am sorry you have not yet got any particular accts from America, tho' in hopes all is well there. Shall be much obliged for any news from that quarter. You may put the utmost confidence in the above gentlemen, as it is one of the first houses in St. Malo, and I make no doubt but they will be very punctual in complying with their contracts. As my ship is now fitted and ready for sea, I employ my time in exciting a universal spirit of American commerce, which I am in hopes will prove useful both to my country and countrymen; if so shall be overpaid for any trouble I may have in accomplishing these desireable ends of furnishing them with the necessaries they at present stand so much in need of. If I can be of any use to the United States here shall cheerfully content myself to stay, but if not, hope

you will obtain leave for my immediate departure, as I am heartily tired of France, tho' treated with the greatest respect by all the people of this port, except the Admiralty officers, who seem rather to adopt the line of Mr. Gonnet's conduct towards me, carrying it with a very high hand. I can only say I am sorry our situation is such as puts us under the disagreeable necessity of submitting to such indignities as are exercised over us in the Ports of France. I remain,

Gentlemen, etc.

St. Malo, 31st Aug. 1777.

Gentlemen, — I this day received orders from the Minister of Marine at Paris, notified me by the Commissary and Judge of the Admiralty to depart the port immediately, and not to enter again on any consideration. I was much surprised to receive those orders without a line from you. I told them I would sail the first fair wind and am now preparing for sea as fast as possible, but shall endeavour to gain time to receive your orders. As I apprehend these orders will be very strictly executed here, think it will be necessary to send yours by the first opportunity, unless you can prevail on the minister to let us wait your time, as I have now promised to sail the first fair wind. I hope you will order me immediately to America. We purpose sending the Sloop Dolphin round with a French captain and crew, as I don't think it adviseable to send Capt Nicholson's officers and men round in her, as I am creditably informed that there is 10 or 12 sail of British ships of war and privateers cruising off Nantes. If your orders are not already despatch'd, hope you will despatch them as soon as possible. Please give me all the news you have, both from England and America. I remain, gentlemen, etc.

Wickes sailed for America from St. Malo the 14th of September, with a fair easterly wind, in company with the "Dolphin" (the French authorities would not allow the ingenious scheme proposed by Wickes whereby she was to be sent to Nantes), as we learn from a later letter of Captain Nicholson's. But he never reached the United States. His ship foundered off Newfoundland with all on board save the cook. "He was a gallant officer," says Franklin, "and a very worthy man."

There is little question as to whether America, through her commissioners and captains, from this time onward, did or did not violate French neutrality. According to the principles of international law as held to-day, here is one of the simplest cases of breach of neutrality imaginable. A modern writer sums up the obligations of neutral powers in the following words:[1] "It is a violation of strict neutrality for a neutral State (1) to lend money, or (2) to supply troops, or (3) to open harbors for hostile enterprises, or (4) to allow the presence of any individual or vessel pertaining to a belligerent State within his territory, when believed to be stationed there for the purpose of carrying out a hostile undertaking; or (5) to knowingly suffer its subjects to prepare or to aid in preparing or augmenting any hostile expedition against a friendly power, as, for instance, to build, arm, or man ships-of-war with such purpose in view." Instance of violation of every one of these five articles may be found in the conduct of

[1] This statement agrees on the whole with the general course of opinion on the duty of neutral nations among recent publicists. Many, however, would not go so far as this, — some holding a continuance of amicable relations to be sufficient for neutrality; others adding to this *impartial* behavior toward each. See CALVO, Droit International, ii. 314. The word *impartial* used in this way is liable to misconception. Would France have acted impartially, for instance, had she allowed both American and English the privilege of fitting out privateers in her ports?

France. France (1) loaned 3,000,000 livres to the commissioners of the United States for the use of that nation; (2) she allowed large numbers of officers of her army, some of them of great experience, to serve in the armies of the United States; (3) her harbors were open to Paul Jones, Wickes, Johnson, and Nicholson, to refit in and thence to pounce upon British commerce; (4) it was notorious that the American commissioners were at all times busy with warlike schemes against Great Britain; and (5) Beaumarchais was permitted to send stores from the royal arsenals to be used against Burgoyne.

But it goes without saying, of course, that the opinions of publicists to-day in the matter of international law, are more advanced than was the practice of nations in the last century. In that century the rights of neutral States were constantly ignored by England, who, with her preponderating naval supremacy, was enabled to carry out her own code in time of war. It was the time of the Armed Neutralities, — steps in the right direction, even though dictated to a great degree by court intrigue and the schemes of diplomatists. And if England were firm in opposing any extension of neutral rights, it is natural that neutral States should find it easy that their views on neutral duties should be obscured. On the general principles of that time, France would not probably have felt bound to proceed (in appearance at least) with such severity towards the American cruisers. But beyond the general principles of public law, France was at that time particularly bound by treaty with Great Britain in regard to these very points. The matters are stated with perfect clearness in the treaty of commerce between the two powers, signed at Utrecht in 1713 and afterwards frequently reaffirmed. "It shall not be lawful," says Article XV., "for any foreign Privateers, who have Commissions

from any other Prince or State in enmity with either Nation to fit their ships in the Ports of one or the other of the aforesaid Partys, to sell what they have taken, or in any manner whatever to exchange either Ships, Merchandizes or any other Ladings; neither shall they be allowed even to purchase victuals, except such as shall be necessary for their going to the next Port of that Prince from whom they have Commissions." And Article XXXVI. declares that "no Shelter or Refuge shall be given in their Ports to such as have made a Prize upon the subjects of either of their Royal Majestys, and if perchance such Ships shall come in, being forced by stress of weather, or the damage (as far as it is not repugnant to other Treatys made with other Kings or States) that they go from thence and retire elsewhere as soon as possible."

A clear view of these facts would of course have shown Captain Wickes that the French government was not so unjustifiable as he considered, when it ordered him out of one port after another on twenty-four hours' notice. It could not have done less without precipitating an immediate breach with Great Britain. It probably did not do everything that it could. This has been the general impression, and such a line of conduct would be just what we should expect of a power in the position of France at that moment. The truth is that Wickes and his brother captains were treated with the utmost leniency. The great wonder is that Great Britain endured these flagrant breaches of neutrality without a declaration of war. But Vergennes was famous for his smooth tongue. An old diplomat, familiar with the courtesies of almost every court in Europe, he was probably as complete a master of the soft answer as was needed by the circumstances. But even he found it necessary to complain to the

American Commissioners. An extract from a letter which he wrote them will render his position clear: —

"You cannot forget that at the first conversation I had with both of you I assured you that you should enjoy in France, with respect to your persons, every security and comfort which we showed to foreigners; and as to your commerce and navigation, we should grant every facility compatible with the exact observation of our treaties with England, which the Kings principles would induce him religiously to fulfil. In order to prevent every doubt with respect to the vessels that may participate in the favors which we grant in our ports to nations in amity, I pointed out to you the article of the treaty which forbids the power of allowing privateers free access into our ports, unless through pressing necessity, as also with respect to the deposit and sale of their prizes. You promised, gentlemen, to conform thereto.

"After so particular an explanation we did not press the departure of the ship Reprisal, which brought Mr. Franklin to France, because we were assured it was destined to return with merchandise. We had quite lost sight of this vessel, and imagined she was in the American seas, when, with great surprise, we understood that she had entered L'Orient, after taking several prizes. Orders were immediately given that she depart in twenty-four hours, and conduct her prizes to the only admiralties that were authorized to judge of their validity. Captain Wickes complained of a leak. Being visited by proper officers, his allegation was found to be legal and admissible, the necessary repairs were permitted, and he was enjoined to put to sea again.

"After such repeated advertisements, the motives of which you have been informed of, we had no reason to

expect, gentlemen, that the said Mr. Wickes would prosecute his cruising in the European seas; and we could not be otherwise than greatly surprised that, after having associated with the privateers, the Lexington and the Dolphin, to infest the English coasts, they should all three of them come for refuge into our ports. You are too well informed, gentlemen, and too penetrating, not to see how this conduct affects the dignity of the King, my master, at the same time it offends the neutrality which His Majesty professes. I expect, therefore, from your equity, that you will be the first to condemn a conduct so opposite to the duties of hospitality and decency. The King cannot dissemble it, and it is by his express order, gentlemen, that I acquaint you that orders have been sent to the ports in which the said privateers have entered, to sequester and detain them, until sufficient security can be obtained that they shall return directly to their country, and not expose themselves, by new acts of hostility, to the necessity of seeking an asylum in our ports.

"As to the prizes they may have taken, if they have brought them into our ports, they have orders to go out immediately, and the same conduct shall be observed towards any capture of any nation whatever. Such are the obligations of our treaties, which the King cannot by any means evade. It will be highly proper for you to make these intentions known, wherever you may think it most expedient, so that new privateers, from the example of the misconduct of those against whom we are obliged to be vigorous, may not expose themselves to the like embarrassments."

To this letter the commissioners returned an answer excusing Captain Wickes and his fellows for returning to L'Orient after their cruise, on the ground that he had

been chased by English men-of-war. They added that orders had already been sent that they should return to America. It was only a month before, that Franklin had written to some merchant at Nantes, —

"The prize cannot, as you observe, be sold and delivered in your port, — it being contrary to treaties, and to ordinances made in conformity to those treaties. But I suppose it may be done in the road without the port or in some convenient place on the coast, where the business may be transacted and conducted with discretion, so as to occasion no trouble to the ministers by applications from the English Ambassador. I say I suppose this may be done because I understand it has been practised in many places on the coast of Brittany. But a formal order from the Minister to permit such a sale and delivery in any port of France is not to be expected while the peace continues and the treaties consequently in force."

To tell the truth, the commissioners pressed these matters about as far as they could go without endangering their favor with the Court. Stormont was in no way wrong in complaining of the American cruisers, nor was Vergennes severe when he endeavored to keep Wickes from perpetually refitting his ship for new cruises. It is only the fact that the French government was practically in a hostile position toward Great Britain that explains these proceedings.[1] Had they been really neutral, Wickes

[1] The Earl of Shelburne in the House of Lords "denied in the most positive terms [France] being ingenuous in her professions of friendship. Have you insisted (said he) on Dr. Franklin and the other American deputies being sent from France? What answer have you received? Have you required the French Ministers to shut their ports against the Americans as Portugal has done? Have you explicitly demanded that all American privateers should be removed from the French ports, and should not be permitted to revisit them either with or without their prizes?" HANSARD, xix. 345.

and the rest would have been put under arrest and their ships confiscated.

On one occasion the Americans pushed Vergennes too far. Flagrant as were the breaches of neutrality perpetrated by Wickes, they were almost as nothing when compared with those of another of the famous figures in the early naval history of the United States, — a man whose reputation at this time was second to that of no one of the American captains. Though his renown was more ephemeral than that of John Paul Jones, for the short time that he did sail the narrow seas there was no name more famous in its way than that of Gustavus Conyngham.

About the beginning of March, in 1777, before the attention and vigilance of the Court at Versailles had been aroused to the full extent, a merchant from Philadelphia, William Hodge by name, came to France and entered into relations with the Commissioners, and with Silas Deane especially. Arthur Lee was away in Spain. It had always been one of Deane's favorite projects to fit out privateers in the ports of France which should annoy the British shipping. As we have seen, Vergennes, in his first interview with the Commissioners, pointed out that this sort of proceeding was inconsistent with the dignity of the King of France, and could not be allowed. It is probable that the Commissioners thought that the proceedings of Wickes, Jones, Nicholson, Johnson, and other privateer captains would be winked at, or at any rate that proceedings would not be pressed against them with relentless vigor. It is not so probable that it was the combined wisdom of Franklin, Deane, and Lee which conceived the idea of fitting out in the port of Dunkirk an American privateer which should make prize of the Harwich packet. How much Franklin had to do with the

affair is doubtful. Deane is the only one of the three who appears in the documents, and it was evidently he who saw to carrying through the details. It was a bold scheme and a successful one. Mr. Deane and Mr. Hodge purchased a lugger at Dover, through a certain Captain Cruise, who went over there for that purpose. The boat was brought to Dunkirk, and thither Mr. Hodge repaired, taking with him a credit on Morel & Fils, the bankers, from M. Grand, the banker of the Commissioners. The lugger was equipped with the utmost secrecy, especial pains being taken to conceal her existence, or at least her purpose, from the French ministry, which had, at almost this very date, enforced its statements to the Commissioners in regard to their neutrality, by ordering Wickes to leave the port of L'Orient within twenty-four hours. It was then that that gallant officer, as has been seen, had appeared there after a successful cruise, with several prizes. When the lugger at Dunkirk was ready to sail, William Carmichael was sent from Paris with instructions for a cruise in the Channel and to the northward, to pick up prizes, and particularly the Harwich packet plying between England and Holland; and the lugger went to sea under command of Gustavus Conyngham, who had in his pocket a Continental commission as captain.

Conyngham succeeded well. He came across the mail-packet after a day or two, and captured her with the utmost ease. She was a valuable prize, — as valuable on account of the excitement that her capture caused throughout the English seaports as for any other reason. On the capture of the packet, Conyngham turned back to Dunkirk. In this he was wrong, as it turned out, but he thought himself justified in so doing, on account of the very great number of letters which he intercepted. On

his way back he captured a brig of some value, and brought her also with his first prize to Dunkirk.

The affair stirred up at once a great excitement. The English complained to the French Court, — and with much reason, — and Conyngham was at once arrested and his prizes confiscated. The English were at once promised that everything should be done, — Conyngham should be given up, the prizes should be restored, nothing of like nature should be allowed again.

These assurances gave very great pleasure in London. "The Post Office have received notice," writes George III. to Lord North, "from the agent at Dover, that news is come by a letter from Captain Frazer at Dunkirk, that Cunningham, the commander of the pyratical vessel that seized the Prince of Orange packet-boat is thrown into prison, and the said packet-boat and the other prizes ordered by the Court of France to be restored. This is so strong a proof that the Court of Versailles mean to keep appearance, that I think the news deserves a place in the speech you will make." Lord North accordingly gave it a place. In speaking of the state of the country in regard to the war in America, and the attitude of the French and Spanish Courts, he informed the house that friendly assurances were received from the Court of France, and that the war preparations which had been noted in Spain were not of such a nature as to be alarming. He noted the sailing of the Newfoundland fleet from France without a convoy, as a proof of the sincerity of the peaceful asseverations of France, and he went on to say that a recent proof he had received that morning of the very friendly and pacific disposition of the Court of Versailles put it beyond doubt; which was, that the pirate who had made prize of the Harwich packet was in confinement at Dunkirk by order of that court, — "a circumstance too strong to

require any collateral information to support his former assertion, that we had nothing to apprehend from that quarter which was likely to interrupt us from prosecuting our rebellious colonies to a state of constitutional obedience." This statement was received by Shelburne and the Whigs with much incredulity.

They were in this quite right; and apparently Lord North's pleasing trust in the French Court was not so widely spread through the commercial world as to render it certain that the same incident would not occur again, as in fact it did. Insurance rose; French ships were used to transport British goods, and the name of Conyngham became a terror to the underwriters and merchants.

The packet-boat and the brig were given up to the English, which as Mr. Deane remarks, "gave them a temporary triumph." But Mr. Hodge and Mr. Deane took counsel together once more, and purchased another vessel for Conyngham, a cutter this time, a swift-sailing vessel, which they equipped with fourteen six-pounders and twenty-two swivels. The next step was to obtain the release of Conyngham and his crew from prison, which, strange to say, they obtained with but little trouble, upon representations that he was to sail direct for America and would not cause the Court of Versailles more annoyance. Mr. Hodge gave bonds for his so doing. But that Court would have preferred that he should not sail; and when it was represented to them that the owners of the new cutter would lose greatly if they were not permitted to make use of the vessel, which they had with great expense purchased and fitted out, the Court proposed to purchase the vessel. But this offer was not accepted, and so Conyngham was allowed to sail from Dunkirk again, as though on some trading voyage, as the Commissioners subsequently remarked. But it was no trading voyage

which Conyngham and his crew had in mind. They no sooner got to sea than they proceeded to make prize of everything that they met; they even threatened to burn the town of Lynn, which they wished to ransom. Conyngham did not, however, return to Dunkirk, nor to any other French port, so that he caused no fresh embarrassments. Mr. Hodge, his surety, was, indeed, arrested and sent to the Bastille, and Vergennes wrote a most severe letter for Grand to show the Commissioners. But Mr. Hodge was discharged on the representation of the Commissioners that he was a person of character, and that they could not "conceive him capable of any willful offence against the laws of this nation;" and on the whole nothing more seems to have come of the matter.

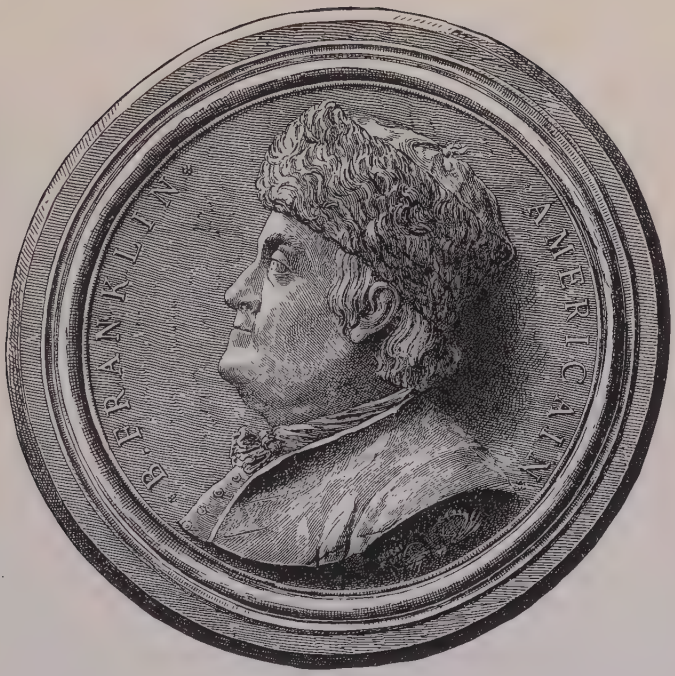
We shall meet with Conyngham again, and may therefore leave him here. If some degree of suspicion may attach itself to his cruises[1] there is none in regard to matters with which his character is concerned. Continued research only confirms the first idea of him with which the reader of his letters is impressed, — of a true sailor, brave in battle, enduring in hardship, fond of his wife, and devoted to his duty and his country.

[1] It was hinted later that his cruises were conceived by Deane and Hodge as private ventures to be paid for out of the public funds, whose profits were to accrue wholly or in part to private persons. There are not enough data to prove or disprove charges like these, nor have we even seen them stated; there is, however, the suspicion of them.

CHAPTER VIII.

1777.

WHENEVER the erratic Arthur Lee was well in Paris, the little American colony, if we may begin to call it so thus early, was torn with jealousies, of which the origin is always to be sought in his crazy, jealous, suspicious, furtive temper. While Congress and its committees had seemed to act with a certain languor about foreign alliances, — so that poor Silas Deane, after he had been sent to Paris, wrote, once and again, that he was distracted because nobody sent him any instructions or even news, — there were, on the other hand, nearly twenty agents of America in Europe making contracts, or trying to make them, or in some other fashion to advance the rebel cause. There were American travellers and adventurers, glad to ally themselves to these people who held some sort of commission. And there were the officers of merchant-vessels and privateers in all the seaports, who made occasion to visit Paris and join in the consultations of the agents of the new nation. Among all these Arthur Lee went and came, whispering whatever suspicion occurred to him at the moment. The cat in the old fable was not more successful in making mischief than was Arthur Lee. Franklin, as has been said, formed the opinion that Lee was crazy, — an opinion which was probably true; and as Lee, once at least, expressed the same opinion of Franklin, there can be no harm in keeping Franklin's opinion upon the record. But Lee was hardly able to do much mischief in the way



THE MEDALLION.

(From a Medallion by J. B. Nini.)

of setting the Americans against each other, before the autumn of 1777. He arrived in Paris from England the day after Dr. Franklin did. He was present with Franklin and Deane when Vergennes received them, and early in February left for Spain. On his return from Spain, he arrived in Paris in May, but was sent by his colleagues to Berlin early in June. It was while he was at that court that his papers were stolen. He was not in Paris again till the end of the summer, and then it is that his proper mischief-making begins. Before that time it would seem that the American agents and those who were interested in the country's cause lived together in tolerable harmony, — their headquarters being naturally at Passy, at the residence of their great chief.

It is interesting to observe that while most American travellers and letter-writers of that time, accustomed to the simplicity of affairs at home, speak of Franklin as if he were in the thick of the pressure of a crowded life, several of the French writers who had occasion to be well-informed speak of his residence at Passy as if it were a sort of diplomatic retirement. Condorcet, in his eulogy on Franklin, delivered after his death, says he knew that he was really an envoy, not to the ministers of France but to her people. As a negotiator, he says, he "observed much and acted little."

We have already cited the unkind language of Capefigue, always a bitter and censorious critic when anything is involved which is not colored with the Bourbon proclivities. Capefigue says, again, of Franklin: "He showed himself little, like all men who choose to exercise a mysterious influence. But he made people talk about him a great deal. When he left his residence at Passy, it was to go to the Academy of Sciences, of which he was an assiduous correspondent. There, in the midst of a pro-

gramme on electricity or a theory of physical experiment, he dropped some words about his dear country — solemn and sad — which would waken the sympathies of those men of science and literature who were the leaders of the eighteenth century."

The silence, almost complete, of the Grimm and Diderot letters with regard to Franklin in the year 1777 may be accounted for by the delicacy of their position as the correspondents of crowned heads. Still, there can be no doubt that Franklin was regarded as being "in retreat" at Passy, and that Louis XVI. alluded to this reserve of his, when, on his presentation at Court the next year, he said that he had been greatly gratified by Franklin's conduct ever since he had been in his dominions.

The letter with which Franklin announced to Vergennes, on the 23d of January, that they wished for an audience, was drawn by Franklin himself, and exists in an elegant manuscript in his careful handwriting, as if he had preserved it with a full sense of the importance of the occasion.

Arthur Lee joined Deane and Franklin on the 22d of December. On the 28th, without any secrecy, the Count de Vergennes, minister of foreign affairs, received them at Versailles. He told them that they should personally enjoy protection in France, and should receive all the hospitalities which France could bestow on strangers. He asked them to prepare a memoir on the situation of affairs in the United States,— which they did,[1]— and by his advice they had an interview with the Count d'Aranda, the Spanish ambassador, who promised to send their papers to his Court. Soon after, they despatched Arthur Lee to Spain

[1] The memoir is printed in the "Life of Arthur Lee," vol. i. page 63. It was dated on the 5th of January. It does not seem to have been anywhere printed officially.

in person; and thus Franklin and Deane were freed in a measure, for some months, from his annoying intrigues. Although the reception Franklin met was cordial, the news from America was bad at the period of his arrival. General Howe had driven the American army from New York, and had reduced Fort Lee and Fort Washington. General Washington was retiring, as if with the purpose of covering Philadelphia, where the Congress had been sitting. But in the middle of March, the commissioners received from Baltimore, to which place the Congress had removed, more encouraging news.

Some illustrations of the hopeful correspondence which followed after the successes at Trenton and Princeton have been printed in a former chapter. The following letter from Robert Morris proved to anticipate plans on which they had themselves entered, and it was so far satisfactory to them. Thomas Morris, who is referred to in it, was the dissipated and unfaithful agent at Nantes whom the commissioners so early found it necessary to remove.

PHILADELPHIA, Jany. 14th, 1777.

HONORABLE GENTLEMEN, — I have the honor to enclose herein a copy of two resolves of Congress, passed the 19th and 29th Novr, by which the Secret Committee are directed to import two hundred and twenty-six brass cannon, and arms and equipage complete for three thousand horse. You 'll observe they are also directed to confer with the Canon Committee as to how many they can provide here of the field-pieces; but we pay little regard to that part, well knowing they will not be able to procure proper metal for many of them.

Therefore I must request, in the name and on behalf of the Secret Committee, that you will contract immediately for these necessary supplies, and send them out to these

States by various conveyances as quick as possible; indeed, I hope you may procure some line-of-battle ships to come out with them, and then there will be little danger of their coming safe. I most sincerely hope the Court of France may be disposed to favor all our views, that they will accomodate you with sufficient loans to pay for them and all other stores we want from Europe; for, although we have plenty of valuable produce, that would soon provide you with funds if we could get it exported safely, yet the difficulties and impediments we meet with render it impossible to get it away half fast enough. Nothing in our power shall be left undone, and Mr. Thos. Morris will be ordered to supply you with money fast as he receives it from the proceeds of our consignments.

ROBT MORRIS,
Chairman of the Secret Committee.

P. S. — These resolves would have been sent long since, but our port has been long blocked up by British men-of-war, and the confusion we were put in on the rapid march through the Jerseys and near approach to this city by the enemy put it totally out of our power to forward any dispatches for some time past. R. M.

Vergennes entrusted his personal communication with the ministers to Gérard, one of the chief clerks in his office. Gérard spoke English well and was a fast friend of the Colonies, and took a prominent part in their subsequent relations with France. He was appointed the first Minister to America after the recognition of independence, and left Paris on the first of April, 1778. In the archives of the French foreign office, at the date of April 5, there is a letter from Mr. Gérard, giving an account of a private interview between Mr. Carmichael and an English agent,

respecting the terms of accommodation between England and the Colonies.

On matters of a more private character, there are some letters preserved from Franklin's correspondence, which will illustrate different points in the history, and in some instances explain matters which have been obscure in letters of his which have been published long ago. The first of these, which is somewhat mysterious, is probably written under a mask, and is the overture of some person who wished to be engaged as a secret agent for information.

Jenny Franklin to Dr. Franklin.

Saint Malo in Brittany, Jany 26th, 1777.

Noble Sir, — Notwithstanding our reciprocal unacquaintance I make bold in the interim to presume the liberty of doing myself the honr of troubling you wth the subsequent lines. Sir: the case is this: the first of February, 1762, your brother Robin Franklin (eldest son to Mr. Luck Franclin and madam Mary Lamb, residenter of the Parish of Doone in the Diocese of Limerick in Ireland) was canonically married to Mademoiselle Geene (alias Jeanne) Sedentè of the parish of St. Oppertune in low Painbeuf, in the Diocess of Nantes. Yr Br died in Nantes, the Gentlewoman continuing still in the state of widowship and actually lives in the city. She got one son by Mr. Franklin, born November ye 12th, (1752). His name is Lewis, a promising, good, well behaved young man, I do assure you. The Gentlewoman, his mother (as finding herself low in the circumstances of honest and decent livelyhood for herself and the son) humbly and sincerely entreats your honour to consider the State of the young man (your cousin) and consequently the poor mothers. She still strongly confides in your human and generous succor

and relief in their present distress and indigency, Wherefore never 'ill fail, nor I neither, to pray the Almighty God for your honours conservation, success, felicity, and prosperity in both spiritual and temporal. D^r^ Countryman, I need not enlarge any farther upon the virtue of Charity to you, for Im morally convinced you are well acquainted and conversed in it, therefore act as a gentleman, and especially towards your flesh and blood. Worthy Sr; you 'll be pleased to address the answer to me, for it will not cost me but to pray for his Majesty, therefore you 'ill address thus: (Au Reverend Pere Pierre Duffy Recollet Irlandois, demeurant chez les tres Reverend Peres Recollets de St. Mâlo, à St. Mâlo en Bretagne.) (For if you 'ill address it to y^e^ Madam y^r^ cousin, she 'll be obliged to pay postage and we are not, as before mentioned but with this advertisement, that you 'ill not forget to cross the superscription of your letter from angle to angle thus beneath. Worthy Honble S^r^, no more offers worthy of your attention, therefore [I] do desist and conclude in wishing your honour a happy new year. So be it.

Noble Sir. Your most obedent, humble servant.

Geene Genny (alias Jeanne) FRANKLIN.

ST. MALO, JANUARY the 26^th^, 1777.

Jenny Franklin was not the only relative, real or imaginary, who sought the honor of correspondence with a person so distinguished. A Frenchman who signs himself "Avocat au Parlement de Berry" also inquires as to their relationship.

APRIL 16^th^, 1777.

SIR, — The fear of disturbing you in your important works has prevented me until now from presenting myself to you, but urged by my family I dare to beg you to permit me to have the honor to see you, that I may learn

whether we are both really descended from the same origin, as many of my relatives assure me. Perhaps this impression springs from the desire which they have, as well as I, to appertain to a great man. I have the honor to be, while waiting your convenience, with very profound respect, etc., etc.,

FRANQUELIN.

And among these very early letters is one, in itself alone of no importance, but which derives an interest from the name of the author. It is a note from the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, with reference to Du Coudray and the other officers who were on board the "Amphitrite."

I received this morning the enclosed letter, which I thought it would be well, sir, for you to see, although you were able to learn part of its contents at Versailles. If I had known your address at Versailles, I would have sent it to you at once. I send it with mine to a gentleman who has just promised me to give it to you if you return this evening, or to have it taken to you if you do not return. I beg you to show it to no one, and to send it to me when you come back. If I learn any news of M. du Coudray, M. le Blond, I shall have the honor of sending to you immediately. I pray you receive my best wishes for America, and the respect, estimation, and attachment with which I have the honor to be, sir, your very humble and obedient servant,

The Duke DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD.

Monday morning.

From this time until his death Franklin was in intimate correspondence with the Duc de la Rochefoucauld.

Franklin's English friends continued their correspondence with him more and more closely. David Barclay,

who was a party in the interesting and almost celebrated effort for reconciliation made in December, 1774, on the occasion when Dr. Franklin played chess with Lord Howe's sister, renewed his correspondence. On the 2d of May he wrote Franklin the following letter: —

LONDON, May 2, 1777.

DEAR SIR, — We have striven to the utmost of our limited powers for *reconciliation* between Great Britain and America. If *that* has become impossible, let us, at least, not relax our endeavors to obtain *peace*. Upon what ground would it be possible to establish peace? By your letter to Lord Howe, which has been lately published here, as well as from all other accounts, and from the nature of things, the admission of American independence seems an absolutely necessary preliminary. You know my principles well enough not to be ignorant that such a groundwork would be perfectly consonant to them. I never have wished even for reconciliation upon any of the terms formerly proposed of compromise, which might seem to leave the question of legislation undetermined, but with a view to avoid the decision of that question in blood, leaving even the pretensions to die away of themselves by lapse of time, just as parental authority does in private life. The thought of conquest has always seemed to me to be folly in the extreme, and the lust of dominion I have ever held to be a vice, in any nation, of the deepest die. I fear that no interposition of private persons can now put a stop to the fatal progress of things; but, if it were possible to declare a suspension of arms, and to admit the independence of America, might not the two countries be reclaimed to peace, and the greatest part of the advantages, mutually subsisting, as they did not many months ago, still rescued from ruin? Convinced as I am of your sincere desire to

restore peace, as it was formerly to prevent the rupture, I should be happy to concur to that blessed end. I send you a letter[1] that was intended for you a year ago or more. I don't know whether any duplicate has reached you. It has been returned. I send it now only as a testimony that I have always wished to restore harmony, and to prevent this fatal war. I write in a great hurry for an occasion of sending this to you, of which I have but a few minutes' notice.

I am, with the greatest regard,

very affectionately yours,

D. B.

William Strahan, his London publisher, had written him a friendly letter as early as January 23. Whether Franklin's well-known letter to Strahan, "You are now my enemy and I am yours," were ever more than a joke, it is difficult to say. It is certain that Strahan entertains no hard feelings. Writing on the 27th of May, he says: —

Your excellent friend in Pall Mall is in perfect health, and as much yours as ever. So are Mr. (now Sir Grey) Cooper, his lady and family. From honest Small I had a letter dated exactly the same day yours was, viz., Feb. 4. He appears to be in good health, but low-spirited, occasioned, doubtless, by his exclusion from that agreeable society which he had so long enjoyed, and to which he was so great an ornament. One paragraph I will transcribe: —

"A few months will now, I suppose, determine the fate of America. I think Dr. Franklin has gone to Paris to pave the way for a reconciliation, through the mediation

[1] Probably from David Hartley. See SPARKS's "Franklin," viii. 222, where Franklin replies to Hartley.

of some men in power there, who may make proposals to Lord Stormont."

I hope he is well informed, or will prove to be a true prophet.

As most of the London newspapers are to be had at Paris, I wonder that you have lately seen so few of them. Those you mention I could easily supply you with, did I know how to convey them to you.

I *do wish* for *peace,* not on *my own* terms, but on *reasonable* terms. We have ALL reason to *wish* for peace. For, *happy were the times,* — *times* that I hope will yet quickly *return,* — *when Englishmen* and *Americans* (brethren in every sense of the word) *could with great truth and sincerity,* as I now do, *thus conclude their letter.*

I am ever, my Dear Sir,

Affectionately yours,

WILLIAM STRAHAN.

Such leisure as the summer afforded must have been largely occupied in sitting to portrait painters, and other artists who were modelling his likeness. No one undertakes to say how many likenesses of Franklin were made while he was in Paris. But they are to be numbered by hundreds. The Boston collection of engravings contains at least six which may be called original studies, besides a great number of repetitions. The great Huntington collection in the Metropolitan Museum in New York contains the same number.

The first of these pictures to gain great celebrity is one which has always been well known. It is by C. N. Cochin,[1] and is that which represents Franklin very much as he

[1] Sir Nicholas Cochin was a draughtsman and engraver, born 1715 died 1790. He was a member of the Academy of Painting, as was his father, who was also an engraver.

describes himself in his letter to Mrs. Thompson. Beneath this picture, which has been so often repeated, which was then engraved by Saint Aubin, the publishers intended to place the following verses: —

> C'est l'honneur et l'appui du nouvel hémisphère,
> Les flots de l'Océan s'abaissent à sa voix ;
> Il réprime ou dirige à son gré le tonnerre.
> Qui désarme les dieux peut-il craindre les rois ?

The French censorship suppressed these lines as blasphemous. But it may be doubted whether the blasphemy would not have been overlooked, like a good deal of other blasphemy of those times, but for the disrespectful allusion to kings. The reader should remember that Franklin, only three years before, had communicated to the Royal Society in England his paper on the stilling of waves by the means of oil.[1] And the theory that the sea waves may be thus controlled was closely associated with his name. The prohibition of the censorship was absolute. The clever epigram is not to be found on any of the prints, and though the picture has been repeated by many engravers, the verses have never been added to it, to this day.

It is rather a pathetic thing to say, of a year so near the outbreak of the French Revolution, that the great interest at Court during the first months after Franklin's arrival was the renewal of the war between the two great schools of music, led on the one side by Glück, and on the other by Piccini. Strange to say, Marie Antoinette, with her usual facility at taking the wrong side, appeared as the patroness of Piccini. It might have been supposed that the German music would have won the suffrage of a German princess. "A new revolution is prepared for us. What tyranny to wish to be constantly changing our

[1] This paper was read at the Royal Society, June 2, 1774.

pleasures. Must we change our musical system like our political system." This refers to the recall of Turgot to the cabinet. "We were hardly accustomed to the new music before we are forced to give it up. Let us be united, gentlemen, and use all our efforts to turn away the plague which threatens at once the Chevalier Glück and the republic of music."

Such is Diderot's abridgment of the protest on one side, with which all the journals were filled. On the other hand, the queen wished to establish Piccini in France. The Opera had offered him a considerable salary, and Marmontel, then a high authority, had lent himself to Piccini's party. The squibs, epigrams, pamphlets, and other pieces published in this controversy are not to be counted.

In the midst of such a convulsion in Court, the Queen's brother Joseph, the Emperor Joseph II., visited Paris. It is interesting in this connection to observe that the correspondence of Grimm, Diderot, and others — voluminous though it is — does not mention Franklin's arrival, nor allude to him in any way for nine months after his arrival in Paris. It must be conjectured that this silence is due to the relation of the writers to the crowned heads to whom they wrote, and to the prohibition at Court of such allusions. We have already cited the expressions in which, nine years before, these writers showed their aversion to the Economists, who were Franklin's especial friends. The Emperor Joseph, when in Paris, expressed a desire to see Franklin, although, as has been said, "his trade was that of a royalist." The Abbé Niccoli, who represented the grand Duke of Tuscany, was requested to bring them together. He wrote to Franklin, and asked him to take a cup of chocolate with him, at nine o'clock Wednesday, the 28th of May. To this note Franklin adds the memorandum that the intention was to give the

Emperor an opportunity of an interview which should appear accidental. Turgot was present, and the Abbé. "The Emperor did not appear, and the Abbé since tells me that the number of other persons who occasionally visited him that morning, of which the Emperor was informed, prevented his coming; that at twelve, understanding they were gone, he came, — but I was *gone also.*"

It is in this visit that the Count de Falkenstein made the joke which we have quoted in another chapter about his royalist proclivities. When his subjects proved so loyal to the empire at the time of the French Revolution, it was said of him that he had inoculated Austria with liberal institutions, so that she did not have to take the revolutionary fever in the natural way.

The accounts received from America during the summer were anything but encouraging. Indeed, there were depressing circumstances in the affairs of the new nation, such as never existed again. Burgoyne's plan had unfolded itself, — a plan which, according to all human probability, would have succeeded but for Howe's failure to co-operate with him.[1]

The preparations made to receive Burgoyne had been so tardy that Schuyler, who was entrusted with the defence, had been obliged to retire from every post almost without a skirmish. This retreat aroused to the utmost the indignation of the people behind it, and he was bitterly and unjustly condemned. The Massachusetts Council of War, on whom principally he had to rely for

[1] After Lord Shelburne came into office, he found the instructions to Howe in a pigeon-hole, where they had been placed because Germain did not like the handwriting. Shelburne says that Howe never received these instructions, and had this good excuse for his failure. Germain is the Lord George Sackville who had been disgraced in the former reign for cowardice at Minden. By such men was poor England served.

re-inforcements, sent him sharp reproaches instead of regiments. There are some very hard letters — written probably by Gen. Artemas Ward — from this board, and replies from Schuyler, equally sharp. Ward tells Schuyler squarely that the militia will not turn out to serve under him. This difficulty was removed by the appointment of General Gates to the command. Then the Massachusetts Council began to implore their militia officers to make new exertions. "The enemy will soon enter the New England States, . . . unless our army in those parts are, without a moment's delay, re-inforced with such a number of men as will be sufficient to repel them. We exhort you, as you have any regard for your country, to use your utmost and unceasing exertions that the one-sixth part of your militia, ordered to be drafted from your brigade be immediately and with the utmost despatch marched off to join our army in the Northern Department."

Under such repeated appeals the towns of Western Massachusetts were stripped to their last man. In the next generation, women told stories of their harvesting such crops as had been planted, and the last veterans of the Revolution, who are personally remembered by the New Englanders of to-day, were most probably the boys of fifteen of the Hampshire settlements, who went out in the last call "agin Burgine."

Such efforts were successful. The battles of Saratoga were fought which Colonel Creasy rightly counts among the ten great decisive battles of history. The Massachusetts Council was able to turn from fear to congratulation and forwarded to Franklin the following all-important letter. This they entrusted to the secretary of their own Board of War, a young gentleman of Boston named Jonathan Loring Austin.

STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS BAY,
COUNCIL CHAMBER, Oct. 24, 1777.

GENTLEMEN, — The Brigantine Perch, John Harris, Commander, by whom you will receive this letter, has been taken up and fitted out for a voyage to France, solely with a view of conveying to you authentic intelligence of the success of the American Arms in the Northern Department. We sincerely congratulate you upon this occasion, and have the pleasure to inform you that by Express we have just been favored with the most interesting and agreeable intelligence from Major General Gates. We now inclose you a Copy of his letters, as also a Copy of a convention by which Lieut: General Burgoyne surrendered himself and his army, on the 17 Instant, into General Gates Hands. The Prisoners, the Express informs, amount to all Six Thousand, one thousand of which are to return to Canada, — and the English are upon their march towards this town. It seems our Army, since the last Action of the 7th, had entirely surrounded the enemy, taken their Boats with much provision, and entirely cut off their retreat, that Burgoyne had no way to escape but by one violent effort to force his way through our troops or surrender Prisoners of war: it seems he chose the latter. This is a very important acquisition, and will doubtless be attended with the happiest Consequences. It will naturally tend to inspirit our Troops through the Continent and to intimidate and dispirit those of the Enemy. Gen. Vaughan, with about 4000 troops, is pushing up North Run. Fort Montgomery is taken by the enemy, but we hope will soon be retaken, and a thorough check given Gen. Vaughan by the troops Gen. Gates is forwarding for that purpose. We have little doubt that Ticonderoga and Fort Independence will be in our hands

as we learn a body of Troops has been dispatched by Gen. Gates to summon them to surrender.

We also forward you a Copy of a Letter from Gen. Washington, of the 8th Instant to Congress, which we have just received from the Honorable the President. A copy of whose letter covering the same, we also transmit to you. By these letters you will learn the situate of the two Armies at the Southward. Our people, it seems, remain in High Spirits, notwithstanding their late disappointment at Germantown, — and we hope soon to hear that How's army will be Cutt off from any retreat, and are in the same situation as that Burgoyne's is at present in.

The Newspapers accompanying this will furnish you with further particulars as to the respective movements of our Troops previous to Genl. Burgoyne's Surrender.

With these important despatches, young Austin prepared to sail. But the winds would not change at the demand of his eagerness or theirs, and the little vessel lay for a week ready for critical voyage before they had a favoring breeze. Finally, as his journal tells us, on the morning of a Friday, which does not seem to have been unlucky, he started. His journal gives this account of the voyage: —

"Friday morning October 31, 1777. Went on Board the Brigt: Perch Capt. John Harris Commander with Despatches from the Government of the Massachusetts Bay to the Hon.^{able} Comm.^{srs} of the United States residing at Paris to acquaint them with the important news of the Surrender of Gen^{l}. Burgoyne and his whole Army to the Continental Forces under Gen. Gates, and set sail from the Long Wharf in Boston at 10 o'clock A. M. with a fine wind at north, north west. With moderate breezes and

remarkably fine weather for the season, we made the French coast in thirty days without anything remarkable occurring."

They arrived without detention in the river Loire on the thirtieth day of November. The journal proceeds, —

"From Punbeuf we proceeded up the River to —— not more than ten feet from the Edge of the Bank, and were saluted from an American privateer commanded by Capt. Young on his hailing us and our acquainting him from whence we came and the news we had brought. Finding I should not be able to get to Nantes in the vessel till next morning, I accepted Captain Young's invitation to go up in his boat and landed at Nantes about 8 o'clock on Sunday evening the 30th, where I had the pleasure of first publishing the news of our success in America, and had the satisfaction of observing with what manifest joy it was received, not only by the Americans there but by the French in general. I went with Capt. Young, first to Mr. Jon: Williams's apartments who received me very kindly, and shewed me every civility, he acts at Nantes as agent for the Continent, and is very highly respected by the French, as well as by the Comm.rs who can place the utmost confidence in him, and is in every respect a very amiable character. From hence I went and paid my respects to Mr. Morris and delivered him as well as Mr. Williams the letters I brought for them from America, with the account of our situation there which gave them particular pleasure.

"Pleased with being the bearer of such important news, I was solicitous to communicate the same to our worthy Comm.rs especially as they had received no authentic advices for several months and accordingly set out from

Nantes before day the next morning, with a French guide procured for me by Mr. Williams in a post chaise drawn by three horses abreast, (which is the method of travelling here) and breakfasted with Mr. Williams' brother John at Ancenis about 30 miles from Nantes. As I passed each town in the greatest haste being desirous of delivering my letters to the Comm^rs., I could not observe the buildings in the several places or even receive the least necessary information I wanted, as my guide could not speak a word of English and though I tasked my imagination to convey to him my sentiments, yet I was more perplexed to understand his answers.

"On Thursday morning arrived at *Versailles* a large fair City in which is the pallace where the King chiefly resides. I prevailed upon my guide to tarry here an hour and accordingly improved that time in visiting several apartments of the pallace. From Versailles I set out at 10 o'clock and arrived at Passy at the seat of the Comm.^rs at half after 11 oclock and delivered into their hands the letters from America, which afforded them great pleasure, tarryed there four days and in that time received every civility from Dr. Franklin, Mr. Deane and Mr. Lee, that I could expect and was much pleased during my residence there with the frequent congratulations of French gentlemen in the vicinity on the success of the American arms. The account was soon forwarded to Court, and was received with every testimony of joy which were mentioned in these remarkable words by the greatest personage 'Our Friends the Americans' — as I understood.

"On Monday, the 8^th December, went to Paris to reside for a short time and took lodgings at the *Hotel de Vauban, Rue Richelieu.* My chief inducement herein was to have the pleasure of two American gentlemen who lodged in the same Hotel, viz., Capt. Saml. Nicholson of Maryland,

who then commanded a Continental Frigate built at Nantes, and Wm. Carmichael Esq. of the same place, a gentleman of an independent fortune, who had resided in Europe several years and from his knowledge of the different Courts had rendered America signal services. I understood from him that it was what he offered to the King of Prussia that induced that monarch to ask if America had *thrown sixes.*

"Tuesday the 9th Went with Mr. C. to the Duchess of —— mother to the amiable Marquis of Fayette who is in the American Army, who, with his lady, a very handsome young lady interrogated me concerning the Marquis. I related to them through Mr. C. the esteem in which he was held by G. W. and every American, the bravery he had shown and the honor he had acquired, which afforded them particular satisfaction."

Although Austin, in his journal, gives so little detail of the critical moment of his arrival, he left a more minute and interesting account behind him in conversation. It was really as dramatic as the most eager reader could wish it should be. His carriage dashed into the court-yard of the Hôtel Valentinois, and Franklin and all the commissioners came down to meet him. "Sir, is Philadelphia taken?" cried Dr. Franklin to the messenger. "It is, sir," said Austin, and the old man turned away.

"But, sir, I have greater news than that. General Burgoyne and his whole army are prisoners of war!"

No man has ever carried more important news. That happens, alas! which always happens at periods of great crisis, — that the persons most interested are far too much engaged either to record their own impressions, or indeed to state the details for which after-history is eager. Lee's journal, generally diffuse to tediousness, does not express

emotion in one syllable. He does say that the Commissioners sent immediately an express to Versailles, and that he himself wrote to the Spanish ambassador and the Prussian secretary. Beaumarchais and Sir George Grand, the banker, drove immediately to Paris in a *cabriolet à glaces*, one can guess with what object. They drove so fast that the cab was overturned, and they both were wounded; Grand broke his collar-bone.[1] Besides the despatch from Massachusetts, which the reader has seen, the Commissioners had received a copy of Gates's original letter, which is, for him, singularly modest.

ALBANY, 19 October, 1777.

SIR, — I have the pleasure to send your Honourable Council the Inclosed Copy of a Convention By which Lieut. General Burgoyne surrendered Himself and his whole Army on the 17th Instant into my Hands. They are now upon their March towards Boston. General Glover, General Whipple with a proper guard of Militia escort them, and are to provide all such Necessary articles as may be wanted upon the March. I am so extreamly busy in pushing the Army forward to stop the Cruel Career of General Vaughan up Hudson's River that I have only Time to acquaint you that my Friend General Lincoln's leg is in a fair way of doing well, and to testify with what respect I am, Sir, &c.,

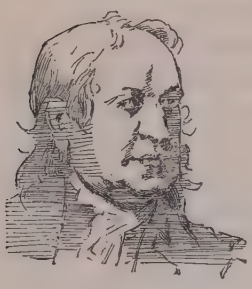
HORATIO GATES.[2]

Austin also brought Washington's last despatch to Congress, which Hancock, then President, had forwarded for the information of the Massachusetts Council. This was after the battle of Germantown, and expresses Washing-

[1] BACHAUMONT.

[2] The original, which is all in Gates's own handwriting, is in the Massachusetts archives.

ton's chagrin at his failure on that occasion. "Every account confirms the opinion I at first entertained, that our troops retreated at the instant when victory was declaring herself in our favor." "We did not know till after the affair was over how near we were to gaining a complete victory, but we have since learned that preparations were making to retreat to Chester." The impression which the Massachusetts Council had, that there was a good probability of expecting Howe's surrender also, was not the mere ebullition of success. Washington himself writes to Putnam, who was in command on the North River, "Should Providence be pleased to crown our arms in the course of the campaign with one more fortunate stroke, I think we shall have no great cause for anxiety respecting the future designs of Britain." In fact, after the battle of Germantown, and after the defeat of the English in their attack on Redbank, General Howe withdrew within his lines around Philadelphia. Here they strengthened themselves as much as possible, "while we hover around to cut off their supplies." It was to this state of things that Franklin alluded when he said, in Paris, that General Howe had not taken Philadelphia, but that Philadelphia had taken him.



HORATIO GATES.

Austin's news was received in France with the same public joy which would have welcomed a victory of the French armies. On the 12th a meeting of the French ministers was held, and on the 17th Gérard informed Franklin and the others that the King was determined to acknowledge American independence and make a treaty. He would

take no advantage of the present situation to obtain terms which otherwise would not be convenient, for the King hoped that the treaty would be durable, and the friendship of the nations last forever. This could not be expected if each nation was not interested in continuing it as well as making it. The concurrence of Spain would be necessary, and was expected. As soon as the courier arrived from Spain the whole affair would be concluded. But all this must be a dead secret till the Spanish money fleet arrived,—"the Brazil army and fleet" of Spain,—and until she could make peace with Portugal. The Commissioners replied, and expressed their hope that the friendship might be eternal. They said that republics were usually steady in their engagements; to which the Secretary replied that France had been as steady to them.

In the same despatch the Commissioners were able to announce to Congress the promise of an additional aid of three million livres, with the expectation of the same sum from Spain. The French ministry had also granted a frigate to carry their despatches.

The news of Burgoyne's surrender had been received by the English government by way of Canada the day before Franklin received it in Paris. The news was known in the city, and in answer to questions in the House of Commons, the American Secretary was obliged to announce it there. Col. Barré moved for full papers and accounts, but the government refused to grant them, and the House sustained it. David Hartley, Franklin's friend, asked leave to introduce resolutions "that it is unbecoming to proceed any farther in the support of this fruitless, expensive, and destructive war;" but these resolutions were rejected.

The news of the Treaty of Alliance with France was announced in London on Saturday the fourteenth day of

March. Mr. Austin's journal gives this notice of the impression made there, for he was then in London:[1]—

"On Saturday it was reported that France had acknowledged the independance of America; on Monday the same was announced in the papers; on Tuesday Lord Weymouth and Lord North acquaint the two houses that they should the next day lay before them a message from his Majesty. Stocks fell two pr. cent to-day. N. B.—Received a message from the French Embassador that if I intended to leave England the sooner I did it, the better.

"Seventeenth. Went to the House of Lords with Mr. Vaughan and Dr. Priestly, to hear the debates in consequence of the message from the King, but no persons were admitted. Dined with Mr. V., and in the evening went to Drury Lane to see Hamlet. Entertainment, Belphegor, or The Three Wishes. Mr. Henderson in the character of Hamlet.

"Eighteenth. Dined this day with the Earl of Shelburne,[2] in company with the Marquiss of Granby, now Duke of Rutland, Lord Granby, Lord Ferrers, Colonel Barré, Lord Mahon, son-in-law to the Earl of Chatham, Viscount Pitt, Mr. Dunning, &c. &c. Was very kindly received by the Earl, and treated with every civility by him and the other Lords. They were very inquisitive respecting our real situation in America, the disposition of the people in general, and in what manner we were provided. I endeavored to answer all their Lordships' questions by setting forth the many difficulties and distresses Americans had undergone, the great affection that country ever had for England, which was always considered and mentioned as its home, the great exertions it had

[1] Mr. Austin travelled in England as George Brown.

[2] To whom Dr. Franklin had introduced him.

made in its own defence during this unnatural war, and the amazing supplies it had acquired during this contest; that I was satisfied they were now in a much better situation to carry on a war with any enemy for six years than they were eighteen months past, for six months; and if their Lordships would permit me to speak my real sentiments, I should not hesitate to say that they would never relinquish their Independance but with their lives. Their Lordships might possibly think I exaggerated the answer, but I endeavored to set America in as exalted and true a light as possible. The general and most prevailing disposition in all ranks is to conclude a peace with America rather than use any coercive means. The importance of that country is now too well known. The resentment of England is now turned towards France, but they have so far exhausted their strength in endeavoring to enslave America, that they cannot avenge the insult offered." [1]

[1] It is interesting to compare with the young Whig's journal, the graver and sadder entries which Governor Hutchinson made in his. He was at this time living in London, in what was to him exile: —

"16th. — The papers to-day announce a French war, and say the F. Ambassador has acquainted Lord Weymouth the F. King had entered into a Treaty with the Colonies as Independent States. It is said Lord Stormont has given the same intelligence. Mr. Morris, of the Customs, called, and says Adm. Hill informed him L. Sandwich had ordered all the Captains in the navy to their ships immediately.

"17th. — Everybody is struck dumb! The declarations from France, that they have entered into a Treaty with the Colonies as Independent States, seems to make a war inevitable. I met Gen. Monkton. He is in pain for Howe's fleet in the Delaware; thinks the French force gone out may be too strong for them. The message from the King is to be communicated to-day. An address must follow, — whether for an immediate declaration of war is doubtful.

"The sudden agreement of France seems to be the effect of the new measures here. Franklin's act [or *art*] probably carried him to require an immediate answer, — otherwise the Colonies would close wth England; but this is conjecture."

CHAPTER IX.

1778.

VOLTAIRE AND FRANKLIN.

THE new year opened upon the Commissioners with prospects far more hopeful than had welcomed them the year before. On the other hand, there were jealousies and doubts in the American Company which made their life less agreeable than could have been wished.

The event which most engaged the attention of Paris in the beginning of the year was the arrival of Voltaire. He was in the eighty-fourth year of his life, and it proved indeed to be the last.[1] His proposed arrival had been much discussed, had been announced, contradicted, and announced again. A letter from Geneva, written in December, said, "Voltaire will not go to Paris, but he is greatly pleased to be urged to go. He would be glad to give this éclat to his glory, but he also wishes to prolong his life, which is but the continual thought of his glory, and he knows that at his age a journey to Paris would put his health in some danger." But, as it proved, on the 10th of February, to every one's surprise, Voltaire appeared in Paris. "The appearance of a ghost, or that of a prophet, or of an apostle, would not have caused more surprise and admiration than that of the arrival of Mons. de Voltaire. This new prodigy suspended for some moments every other interest, the

[1] He was born, or thought he was, February 20, 1694. The register of his birth does not agree with his own statement, however.

noise of war, the intrigues of lawyers, the tracasseries of the Court, even the great quarrel between the Glückists and the Piccinists. Encyclopædic pride humbled itself. The Sorbonne raved, all literature was moved, the Parliament kept silence, and all Paris rushed to throw itself at the feet of its idol. Never would the hero of our time have enjoyed his glory with more éclat if only the Court had honored him with more favorable, or less indifferent regard."[1] The King asked coolly if the order which forbade his return to Paris had been rescinded. Some kind friend immediately told Voltaire of this; but the King meant no harm, and the visit passed on smoothly.

Our little colony of Americans all noticed Voltaire in their way, and the presentation of Franklin to the older philosopher was dramatic. Austin's diary gives a most tantalizing account of Voltaire's personal appearance:[2] "Walking the gardens of the pallais Royale, saw the famous Mons. Voltaire, so famed for his writings. He has been lately recalled from exile by the King, with leave to tarry at Paris for twenty-five years. He is at present the Idol of the people, and though near eighty years of age, his Faculties are very bright. His person is a mere skeleton. Several of his comedies have been lately revived at the Comedie Francais, at some of which he has been present and received the greatest applauses."

Austin was wrong in supposing that the King recalled Voltaire; but the remark shows the drift of opinion in Paris, outside the Court, at that time. The Grimm-Diderot correspondence shows distinctly that the Queen would have been glad to do something gracious, in the drift of public sentiment. It also gives a single instance where the King was almost compelled to give his orders or his

[1] The Grimm-Diderot correspondence for February, 1778.

[2] April 11, 1778.

permission for a bust of Voltaire. But the precise attitude of the Court is distinctly explained in the following report from Mercy, the Austrian ambassador, to Maria Theresa, at the date of March 20, 1778: —

"The arrival of the poet Voltaire brought about the greatest extravagance in the homage which people here wished to show to this dangerous *bel esprit.* They would have wished to see him called to Versailles, and that the King should give him a distinguished reception. The queen was very anxious for this; but His Majesty refused very squarely, and declared that she should not honor in any way a man whose ethics had occasioned so much trouble and inconvenience." To this statement Arneth, the editor, adds: "Every one knows the enthusiasm which seized Paris on the arrival of Voltaire; the Court, completely divided in opinion, no longer took any part. The queen, if one may believe the various accounts of the times, wished to show him some attention; the king formally opposed."

Mr. Adams's first sight of Voltaire was at the theatre, on the 27th of April. "In the evening went to the French Comedy, and happened to be placed in the first box, very near to the celebrated Voltaire, who attended the performance of his own 'Alzire.' Between the acts the audience called out Voltaire, and clapped and applauded him the whole time. The old poet arose, and bowed respectfully to the audience. He has yet much fire to his eyes and vigor to his countenance, though now very old."

Lee's journal fails us at this date, but in after life he used to say that the Commissioners asked to be presented to Voltaire, and that he granted their request. "As they entered the room he raised himself feebly up in his bed,

and in a momentary glow of enthusiasm, repeated some beautiful lines from Thompson's 'Ode to Liberty,' commencing 'Oh liberty, thou goddess ever bright,' etc."

The lines are not Thomson's but Addison's. They are to be found in the letter to the Earl of Halifax.

> "O Liberty, thou goddess heavenly bright,
> Profuse of bliss, and pregnant with delight!
> Eternal pleasures in thy presence reign,
> And smiling Plenty leads thy wanton train;
> Eas'd of her load, Subjection grows more light,
> And Poverty looks cheerful in thy sight;
> Thou mak'st the gloomy face of Nature gay
> Giv'st beauty to the Sun, and pleasure to the day."

All the "éclat" and "glory," of which the memoirs are so full, were crowded between the 29th of February and the 30th of May, on which day poor Voltaire died. One says, "Poor Voltaire!" because so much was pressed upon an old man of eighty-four by the enthusiasm and audacity of Paris, that the wonder is that he lived through the four months, rather than that he died at the end of them. It was not strange that the public sentiment of Paris liked to associate him and Franklin. Condorcet,[1] the biographer of Voltaire, says well enough, "In Paris at this time was the celebrated Franklin, who, in another hemisphere, had been, like Voltaire, the apostle of philosophy and toleration. Like him, he had often used the weapon of pleasantry for the correction of human folly, and had learned to regard human perversity as a folly, more terrible indeed, but still to be pitied. He had honored philosophy in the realm of physics, as had Voltaire in that of poetry. Franklin had delivered the immense regions of America from the yoke of Europe, and Voltaire had deliv-

[1] John Adams describes Condorcet thus: "A philosopher with a face as pale, or rather as white, as a sheet of paper, — I suppose from hard study."

ered Europe from the yoke of the ancient theocracies of Asia. Franklin was desirous to see a man whose glory had for so long a time filled both worlds, and fortunately, Voltaire expressed a wish to see him. Voltaire, although he had lost the habit of speaking English, tried to maintain the conversation in that language, but soon resuming his own, said, 'I could not resist the desire of speaking for a moment in Mr. Franklin's language.'[1] The American philosopher presented his grandson, and asked his benediction for him. 'God and Liberty,' said Voltaire, 'this is the only benediction which is fit for a grandson of Mr. Franklin.'"

Voltaire himself fixes a date for this anecdote in a letter to the Abbé Gaultier, of Feb. 21, which became celebrated in a discussion regarding Voltaire's receiving the sacraments.[2] He wrote to the Abbé, "I will say to you the same thing which I said when I gave the benediction to the grandson of the illustrious and wise Franklin, the man of all America most to be respected. I only pronounced the words 'God and Liberty.' All who were present shed tears of tenderness. I flatter myself that you will share these principles."

The dates are thus fixed in the few months of the close of Voltaire's life, in which we may place the few interviews between him and Franklin. The most interesting of these, and that most frequently referred to, is their meeting at the Academy of Sciences. Franklin had been chosen a member of the Academy in 1772. There are one or two notices of his works in the enormous collection of

[1] Another version is perhaps prettier: "Excuse me, my dear; I have the vanity to shew that I am not unacquainted with the language of a Franklin."

[2] The Abbé Gaultier was the priest who, in fact, confessed Voltaire, and received from him the celebrated Confession of Faith, which declared that he died in the Catholic religion in which he was born.

their memoirs. There can be no doubt that he took part in the informal conversations at their meetings, and that he attended them quite regularly when in Paris. The sneer of Capefigue, quoted in a former chapter, shows that he joined freely in the discussions. But we cannot find that he presented any formal paper there of sufficient importance to be recognized as a contribution to their memoirs, or of such a character as he himself presented once and again to the Royal Society in London. At that time the Academy did not issue, as it now does, *comptes rendus* giving an account of these more informal conversations.

It seems that Voltaire attended the meetings, as well as Franklin. His first appearance at the Academy of Letters, which is generally called "the Academy," as if *par excellence*, was deferred, on account of the failure of his health, until the 30th of March. He was then received at the Academy with every possible display of enthusiasm. As we have occupied ourselves somewhat with the details of the costume of the period, we will venture to say that Voltaire wore his great periwig, *nœuds grisâtres*, "which he dresses every day himself, and which is exactly like what he wore forty years ago, long lace ruffles and the superb fur robe of *zibeline martre*, presented to him by the Empress of Russia, covered by a beautiful crimson velvet, but without any gold embroidery."

The Academy was at this moment without a President for the next three months, and instead of drawing lots, as was the custom, the members by acclamation appointed Voltaire. Every one who had any right was present, excepting the Bishops, who stayed away, a little ostentatiously. Voltaire took the charge imposed upon him with spirit, and at the April meeting, laid out the plan of the new

dictionary. He took the letter A for himself, because he said it would be the longest sub-department, and insisted upon dividing the other letters among the other members at once. After this difficult task was done, he said, "I thank you, gentlemen, in the name of the alphabet." "And we thank you," said the bright Chastellux, who was afterwards half an American, "in the name of letters."

It was at a meeting of the Academy of Science, however, and not at one of the Academy of Letters, that Voltaire and Franklin met in public. The reader sees that they had met in private before. Condorcet gives an account of the scene, but that of Mr. Adams, in his diary at the 27th of April, shows how it appeared to an American: —

"Voltaire and Franklin were both present, and there presently arose a general cry that M. Voltaire and M. Franklin should be introduced to each other. This was done, and they bowed and spoke to each other. This was no satisfaction; there must be something more. Neither of our philosophers seemed to divine what was wished or expected; they, however, took each other by the hand. But this was not enough; the clamor continued, until the explanation came out. 'Il faut s'embrasser, à la Française.' The two aged actors upon this great theatre of philosophy and frivolity then embraced each other, by hugging one another in their arms, and kissing each other's cheeks; and then the tumult subsided, and the cry immediately spread through the whole kingdom, and I suppose, all over Europe, 'Qu'il était charmant de voir embrasser Solon et Sophocle!'"

The last public association of Franklin and Voltaire was on the 28th of November of the same year. Of the curious ceremonial which then took place, at a Freemason's Lodge in Paris, — the Lodge of Nine Sisters, — its

officers afterwards published an account in detail. Greuze, then one of the Court painters, was initiated at the beginning of the meeting, and the Lodge then marched to its hall, to assist in the eulogy of Voltaire. Madame Denis, the niece of Voltaire, accompanied by the Marchioness of Villette, whom he called his "Belle et Bonne," and at whose house he died, were then introduced. Brother Lalande, the astronomer, addressed Mme. Denis. Brother Coron delivered an address, and Brother de La Dixmerie read a circumstantial and complete eulogy. After the exordium of this address, the orchestra, led by Brother Piccini, played a touching morceau from the opera of "Castor," set to appropriate words, and after the first part of the address, played a similar passage from "Roland."

This method of lighting up a discourse which might else prove a little heavy, has fallen out of use, but might be tried to advantage in another century.

When the address was ended a clap of thunder was heard, "the sepulchral pyramid disappeared, great light succeeded the gloom which had prevailed till now, an agreeable symphony sounded in the place of the mournful music, and an immense picture of the apotheosis of Voltaire was disclosed. The picture represented Corneille, Racine, and Molière above Voltaire as he leaves his tomb. Truth and Beneficence present him to them. Envy pulls at his shroud, in the wish to hold him back, but is driven away by Minerva. Higher up may be seen Fame, publishing the triumph of Voltaire."

Before this extraordinary picture, Lalande, Greuze, Mme. de Villette produced crowns, with which they crowned La Dixmerie the orator, Gauget the painter, and Franklin. These three then laid their crowns at the feet of the image of Voltaire.

After more verses, a contribution, and a subscription-paper, the brethren passed into the banqueting hall, where covers were laid for two hundred guests. The ordinary healths were drunk; and to the first was joined the health of "the thirteen United States, represented at this banquet by Brother Franklin."

Jean Jacques Rousseau, whose work in literature had impressed France and Europe as no other author but Voltaire had done, died on the second of June the same year; but the last years of his life had been spent in comparative obscurity, and it does not appear that he and Franklin ever met in person.

CHAPTER X.

THE TREATY OF ALLIANCE.

THROUGHOUT the spring and summer of 1777, it had seemed as though France could not remain neutral. The situation between the Courts of Versailles and St. James was a most delicate one. The English ambassador, voicing the sentiment of England, complained bitterly of the open breaches of neutrality. The aid sent by Beaumarchais, and the reception of the Commissioners, were, as we have seen, grounds of well-founded complaint. The perpetual remissness in regard to Captain Wickes and the different privateersmen, who were in reality hardly checked at all in their proceedings, the open boldness shown in the fitting out of Conyngham's expeditions, the constant scheming of the Commissioners at Paris (witness the case of the attempted burning of Portsmouth navy-yard in England by a man who said he was hired by Silas Deane), — all these contributed toward straining the relations between the two Courts. But as the summer passed and the autumn began, there was, for a time, a breathing space. Wickes was no longer in European seas, Johnson, Hammond, and Nicholson were in English prisons, Conyngham had made the English waters too hot for him, while English men-of-war, blocking the French and Dutch ports, were ready to nip in the bud any attempt to imitate his startling career. The Commissioners at Paris were as active as ever, but seemed to bring nothing to

pass. Neither Spain nor Prussia would do anything to encourage the Americans. The news received from America, after the affairs of Trenton and Princeton, was on the whole of a dark character, and in no direction was there much that should make England jealous of the assistance given by France to the Colonists; for even the friends of America in the French ministry were discouraged, and the disposition for an alliance was less, almost, than it had ever been. So, as the autumn passed, the situation at Paris grew quieter at the expense of American hopes. France was more strictly neutral, for there was no one to infringe upon her neutrality. Lord Stormont's occupation was almost gone;[1] Vergennes was able to direct his attention to European complications; the Commissioners at Paris, their plans all coming to naught, were in a most despairing condition, — when the news of Burgoyne's surrender changed the aspect of everything.

The news had the effect of almost immediately bringing the King's advisers to a decision in regard to the American alliance. The United States, according to their views,

[1] Not wholly, however; witness this note from him, quoted by Capefigue at the date Nov. 3, 1777: —

"At Rochefort there is a vessel with sixty guns, at L'Orient an Indiaman pierced for sixty. Both these vessels are intended for the rebels. They will be laden with various cargoes, and freighted by MM. Chaumont, Holten, and Sabatier. The 'Heureux' sailed from Marsailles, under another name, Sept. 26. She goes straight to New Hampshire, although she pretends to go to the [West India] Islands. She has been permitted to take 3,000 muskets and 2,500 pounds of sulphur, — merchandise as necessary for the Americans as it is useless in the islands. This vessel is commanded by M. Lundi, a French officer of distinction, once a lieutenant of M. de Bougainville. The 'Hippopotamus,' belonging to M. Beaumarchais, had on board 40,000 muskets and many munitions of war for the rebels. There are about fifty French vessels laden with munitions of war and various merchandise for the rebels."

had by this brilliant victory made good their claim to *de facto* independency; there was no probable prospect of their being brought again under the domination of Great Britain. If the United States was a nation, it was for the best interests of France that as close a commercial connection as possible should exist between the two powers; for American commerce was regarded, even at that time, as of exceeding value, and to obtain it, it was necessary that a commercial treaty should be entered into. To that end overtures were at once made to the Commissioners. The news of Burgoyne's surrender came on the 4th of December, and was immediately communicated to the French Court. A day or two afterwards, Gérard, the secretary of the Council of State, called upon the Commissioners to congratulate them upon the event, and to hint that the present would be a favorable time to bring forward again the proposition for a treaty. On the 12th an informal conversation took place between Vergennes and Gérard and the Commissioners, and on the 16th Gérard again called at Passy and informed the Commissioners that the King, "after long and careful deliberation on their affairs and their propositions, had determined to recognize their independence, and to make with them a treaty of commerce, and a second treaty for an eventual treaty of alliance."

For the treaty of commerce the Commissioners, as we know, had been furnished with instructions, and with a draft which was accepted as a basis for negotiations. For the treaty of alliance Vergennes proposed a draft. The negotiations were carried through with the utmost good faith and despatch; for Vergennes and Franklin had for each other the most profound respect and confidence, and found it by no means difficult to come to an understanding. Each party endeavored to make the treaties upon

grounds of the utmost reciprocal advantage, that by this means they might be the more lasting.

The treaties were signed the 6th of February, and were at once sent to America for ratification by Congress. Pending this ratification they were kept secret, or rather were supposed to be kept secret, for the news leaked out very soon,[1] although no official notification was made of them until the 13th of March.

The treaty between France and America was a treaty of amity and commerce. It made no reference to Great Britain nor to an alliance against her. It mentioned the United States as an independent nation, and agreed that there should be peace and amity between the contracting parties. It conceded to America the same rights in France as the most favored nation in the matter of imposts and duties; it enunciated the doctrine that free ships made free goods, suspended the *droit d'aubaine* in France as far as Americans were concerned, defined contraband, made arrangements for consuls and so forth. This was the treaty which was afterwards acknowledged to England. On the same day on which this treaty was signed, a second treaty, for eventual and defensive alliance, was concluded. In the preamble of this treaty it was set forth that "His Most Christian Majesty and the United States, having to-day concluded a Treaty of Amity and Commerce, . . . have thought it necessary to consider the means of affirming those relations and of rendering them useful to the safety and tranquillity of the two parties, more especially in case

[1] Lord Stormont, when this rumor got about, went to Maurepas to complain of such a thing being possible, adding, "that the news was admitted in the carriages of the King." Maurepas, according to the anecdote, gave the minister no further satisfaction than the assurance "that the news was denied in the carriages of the Queen," — a remark which seems a step beyond that flippant minister's usual levity. — Flassan, vii. 296.

England, on account of the relations and correspondence following the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, should break the peace with France, whether by direct hostility or by hindering her commerce and navigation, in a manner contrary to the Law of Nations and to the Treaties existing between the two crowns." In such a case His Most Christian Majesty and the United States resolved to join their plans and efforts against the enterprises of their common foe. Of course, it was perfectly well understood by every one that England would break the peace, both by direct hostilities and by troubling navigation, as soon as the first treaty became public. However, this treaty of alliance — by far the most important of the two — was modestly put forth as an arrangement for a possible contingency. The treaty of commerce remained a secret. Had England remained at peace with France, it would have had no effect. It was for an eventual alliance. The contracting powers agreed, in case of war, to make common cause, with the object of sustaining the liberty, sovereignty, and independence of the United States; and the King of France agreed not to lay down his arms until that independence was acknowledged by England. He also agreed to make no conquests on the continent of America (Louisiana and Florida excepted). The American possessions of the contracting parties were respectively guaranteed to each other, and provision was made for the admission of other parties to the alliance.

Such was the alliance between France and America. The two parties entered into commercial and friendly connection, and agreed to defend that connection by joint force of arms if needful. Such an alliance had not at first been thought of. John Adams had desired a mere commercial connection, — "that is, make a treaty to receive her ships into our ports; furnish us with arms, cannon, saltpetre,

duck, steel." [1] He wanted no political nor military connection. In the same way the treaty which the original instructions to the Commissioners directed them to propose to the Court of France contemplated no military aid, no joint undertakings, no political connection. It agreed that in case of war the United States would not aid England against France; it would have exacted a declaration that France would not acquire by conquest any of the remaining British Colonies on the Continent. The Treaty of Commerce signed February 6 was substantially the one meditated by Congress. The Treaty of Alliance was essentially different.

"Thus," remarks an old-line writer on diplomacy, "did the policy of the Minister who directed the French Cabinet prevail over the good sence and the desire for justice of Louis XVI., to make him sanction that dangerous maxim which proclaims the lawfulness of insurrection against the abuse of power." [2] We quote the remark as opening a new point of view from which to consider the alliance between France and the United States. But did Louis XVI., in allying himself to the rebellious colonies of Great Britain, thereby set the seal of his approval upon the principles whereby the Colonies conceived themselves States? Not at all. The United States in 1778 had become a new nation, by right say we, but not only *de jure*, — a new nation *de facto*.[3] It was out of the power of any nation of

[1] Quoted from Adams's Works by TRESCOTT, "Diplomacy of the Revolution," p. 21, where the best statement of the whole matter may be found.

[2] CHŒLL, iii. 373.

[3] The French Court, in a Mémoire subsequently put forth, states that the King considered that "the law of nations, the traditions of diplomacy and the example even of England itself, authorized him to regard the Americans as independent *de facto* from the date of July 4th, 1776, and that he had more reason so to regard them Feb. 6, 1778." FLASSAN, Diplomatie Française, vii. 176.

Europe to deny that the Colonies, which had made good their independence for two years, and had brought affairs to such a point that there was no probability that they would again come under the domination of Great Britain, — that the United States had entered the company of nations. This was a fact, though the nations did not at once feel called upon to recognize it as such. Louis XVI. did recognize it. Allowing the United States to be a nation, it followed that it was to be treated as other nations, — that is, that its internal affairs should be matters of concern to itself alone. Louis XVI., in this alliance, no more recognized the truth of the principles whereon the Independence of the United States was based, than did the United States recognize the justice and propriety of his own political system. The new nation by no means conditioned her friendship upon a recognition of the principles of the Declaration of Independence, and Louis XVI. in his alliance by no means gave in his adhesion to them. He recognized the fact that the United States were a nation in fact. It mattered not to him whether they ought to be so or not.

The treaties were signed on the 6th of February, but were not immediately acknowledged. England was slow to get the news. They were not prepared for the alliance. Three days before the treaty was signed, Hartley was so far from believing it possible that he wrote: "Let nothing ever persuade America to throw themselves into the arms of France. Times may mend. I hope they will. An American must always be a stranger in France. Great Britain may for ages to come be their home." Three days afterward George III., in writing to Lord North, speaks of a war as nothing more than one of the chances of the future; "should a French war be our fate" is his expression. On the 18th he thinks that "most probably the two nations

will be involved." A week later he notices that the French have stopped the Iceland and Newfoundland fishermen, "which," he goes on, "carries the appearance of immediate war." But there were rumors of a treaty; Lord North's agents in Paris kept him well informed of everything that went on which was in any way known to the public. "The papers communicated by Mr. Thornton are very curious," writes the King: "those from Edwards and Forth convince me that France will inevitably go to war; it therefore becomes highly necessary to consider whether Lord Stormont should not soon complain of the open assistance now given by France to the rebels, . . . and demand a categorical answer whether they have signed a treaty with the rebels." For some time there was nothing more than rumor. On the 13th of March the Vicomte de Noailles transmitted to Lord Weymouth the information that his master had concluded a treaty with the United States. On the 27th Lord Stormont arrived in London.

On the 17th the King's ministers gave the information to Parliament. Lord North in the Commons and Lord Weymouth in the Lords at once moved a most loyal address, expressing to the King their resentment at the behavior of the King of France, and assuring him of their utmost devotion and support. In each House an amendment was offered, advising that the incapable ministers, who had brought the King's business into such an unfortunate state of things, should be dismissed. In each House the government was silent under the most vigorous attacks of the opposition, and in both the address was voted without any such qualification.

The various protestations of loyalty and devotion having been gone through, the ministry proceeded at once to push work upon the army and navy, but more especially on the latter. For it seemed on the whole generally under-

stood that the war between France and England was to be in great measure naval. We believe that at this time there was no plan to send a French army into America. But it was well known that D'Estaing had proceeded to Toulon, and that the resources of France were being taxed to their utmost to despatch a powerful fleet under that gallant commander to the aid of the new allies. Therefore the British navy must be put in better condition.

"A war with France," remarks an English author, "can never be unpopular in this country;" and into this war, which was presented to them as a causeless and shameful aggression on the part of France, the people of England threw themselves with spirit. Recruiting was carried on with vigor for both branches of the service; it was "the warmest impress almost ever known," says the same authority; operations were at once begun in all the dockyards, and the King himself made a special journey to Chatham, Sheerness, and Portsmouth to encourage and quicken the preparations for the navy. In a short time there were two hundred and twenty-eight vessels [1] in commission. Of these, fifty were to guard the English seas, while no less than a hundred and thirty were assembled on the coast of America; and in addition to these, Admiral Byron was busily at work preparing to sail in pursuit of D'Estaing and the French.

Meanwhile D'Estaing at Toulon was busy in fitting out the fleet which should bring to America the first avowed and open aid. He sailed from Toulon on the 12th of April, two months before Admiral Byron could get to sea in pursuit, with twelve ships of the line beside frigates.

[1] 85 ships of the line, 88 frigates, and 55 sloops. CAMPBELL'S "Lives of the Admirals," v. 400.

Dr. Cooper of Boston wrote to Franklin a full and curious account of his movements in the form of

A Letter from a Gentleman in America to his friend in France.

Aug. 1778.

Sir, — According to my promise, I now set down to give you a particular and faithful account of the armament of his Most Christian Majesty, under the orders of the Count de Estaing, during his continuancy on the coasts of the United States of America. You know, sir, with what exultation I received the news of the completion of our happy alliance with France, regarding it at once as an illustrious mark of the wisdom and magnanimity of her monarch, and a precious pledge of the safety, the liberty, and glory of my country. The immediate fruit of this alliance was the powerful aid sent us by that great and amiable prince, in the squadron of the Count D'Estaing, consisting of eleven ships of the line, six frigates, and a number of land forces.

We were not more happy in this powerful aid than in the choice of the commander, and the distinguished confidence placed in him by his sovereign, — a leader who with uncommon ardor and intrepidity, and great military knowledge, unites a vigilance and circumspection, a quick decision, and a perfect command of himself in the most trying moments, that mark the great man, and are of the utmost importance in such a command as he was entrusted with. I assure you, my friend, were you as well acquainted as I am with the delicacy and hazard of many circumstances in which the Count was called to act, it would increase your high estimation of his talents, and you would be sensible, even more than you now are, how much the common cause of France and America is

indebted to them: the inestimable fruits of the alliance might at least have been greatly injured, had the service to which he was appointed been committed to a common hand. Hence arose the asperity with which the Count D'Estaing has been treated in some British publications. Such a protection of the new alliance could not hope to escape the virulence of its mortal enemies: and he who draws upon himself marks of particular hatred, from those who most hate an honourable cause in which he is engaged, may wear them in triumph as a sanction to his peculiar merits in that cause. But the merits of the Count are not known even among ourselves in their fullest extent; because many are ignorant, as it is proper they should be, of some circumstances in which they appeared to the greatest advantage. Everybody is indeed sensible that under the auspices of his prince he has rendered the most important service, and given new life to the great cause of America; but every one is not a sufficient judge of those critical moments, and adverse accidents, which human wisdom cannot foresee, nor human power control, by which great talents are often tried, and rendered more illustrious to a discerning eye.

The Count took his departure from Toulon on the 13th of April 1778. In the Mediterranean he was encountered with such contrary winds that it was not in his power to pass the Straits of Gibraltar till the 17th of May. The calms and light winds that afterwards attended him on the ocean prevented the arrival of his fleet at the mouth of the River Delaware before the 7th of July. After having chased on shore the "Mermaid," an English frigate of 32 guns, the squadron of France entered that river, which is full of shoals, without a pilot; the navigation of which is very difficult, even to the people of this country. The Admiral seized the first moment that offered,

to acquaint the Congress and General Washington of his arrival, and the orders he had received from the king his master to act in concert with the force of the United States against the power of Britain. Before his letter could reach that respectable body, they had sent an express to him, acquainting him with the advice they had received from Dr. Franklin and Mr. John Adams, deputies of the United States in France, that an English squadron consisting of eleven ships of the line had sailed from England destined for these coasts; and at the same time to lay before him a list of the British naval force then assembled at New York; which was composed of five ships of 64 guns: one of 70, six of 50, two of 44, with a number of frigates, and other armed vessels. Advices so important and so well authenticated, must have greatly embarrassed and shook an ordinary commander, and led him, in the room of offensive plans, to consult for his own safety. The Count paid a serious attention to them, and acted his part with prudence, but with great firmness. Before he received these advices he was informed that the British forces had evacuated Philadelphia, and after their defeat at Monmouth, retired to New York where their fleet lay. The Count determined to follow them there, without waiting even for a fresh supply of water, — much wanted after so long a voyage, — or for those refreshments that were become necessary to the health of his men. Having anchored in the evening, after being eighty-seven days at sea, he set sail again the next morning, despatching at the same time the best frigate he had in his squadron to convey Monsieur Gérard, the King's Minister Plenipotentiary, and Mr. Silas Deane to Congress; who might otherwise have been in danger from the British cruisers then in the river. A pilot taken from the Delaware had promised the Admiral that he would convoy his squadron into

the middle of the Harbour of Sandy Hook, where he might easily obtain a supply of fresh water. The Count indulged the pleasing hope of this; tho he knew it would bring him before New York, and the whole force of Admiral Howe, already collected there. But the doubts, the fears, the mistakes of the pilot, before he had reached Sandy Hook, and finally his absolute refusal to perform what he had undertaken, threw the Count into an embarrassment more easily conceived than expressed. Not a person had come to him from the shore, — that part of the Jerseys had not then the reputation of the greatest zeal for the common cause; nothing presented itself to the squadron of our allies, unacquainted with our coasts, but an inaccessible shore. They were ignorant how far the British posts which they saw extended; these posts were supported by the fleet ranged within Sandy Hook. The Count, too humane to command what could not be executed, perceived it necessary to reconnoitre the coast in his own person. For this purpose he threw himself into a small boat, and found the communication of the river of Shrewsbury; the navigation of which was so extremely difficult as to cost him an officer, many sailors, and a number of boats, and to bring Col. Laurens into the most imminent danger of being drowned; who was charged with letters from General Washington, and who proved upon this occasion that his patriotism and his courage could face the dangers of the sea with the same firmness that he had met the enemies of his country in the field.

The quantity of water and other refreshments that the fleet of France could obtain in so difficult and hazardous a situation afforded a very small relief; but while there were any hopes of penetrating to the ships of the enemy the general officers and captains of the squadron bravely disregarded the dangers of their stations, — a station where

the English fleet never dared to remain; where the strong gales constantly blew upon the shore, and by burying the isthmus of the Hook in the waves would almost change it into an island. Both officers and men were supported under all their wants and all the fatigues of the service by the hopes of delivering America from the tyranny of the British flag. The pilots, which the care of Cols. Laurens and Hamilton had at length procured for the Count, being called together, left no room for delusion. These experienced men unanimously declared that it was impossible for the squadron to enter. In vain did the Admiral offer them an uncommonly large and generous reward; they gave back the money after it had been counted out to them, and convinced him that the condition upon which it was offered was out of their power.

The difficult navagation in the River Shrewsbury greatly endangered the detachment from the squadron that was on shore. The communication between that detachment and the fleet was sometimes cut off for whole days together. The biscuits for four months, which the ships brought from France was now consumed; their water was almost spent; they had blocked up New York and the British squadron there eleven days, — when General Washington, authorized by Congress to concert military measures with the Count D'Estaing, between whose sentiments there was a perfect agreement, pressed the Count to repair to Newport, the garrison of which was augmented at the very moment when many conjectured it would have left the place.

Strong signs of an approaching storm obliged the Count to weigh anchor; so that he must have left this hazardous station had not the expedition against Newport engaged him to do it. The fleet experienced all that anxiety which must be supposed to possess the bosoms of men who find

themselves at sea with a very insufficient quantity of water. When it appeared off *Point Judith*, then was the favourable moment to have entered Newport. Accordingly, the ships were in order for this, and expecting the pilots, when Genl Sullivan acquainted the Admiral that he was not prepared to act, and desired the attack might be suspended. The Count did not hesitate in complying with this request, — tho he knew that it is a capital advantage in naval operations to surprise an enemy by the celerity of their execution; that a delay might increase the obstacles to their design and afford the British commanders an oppertunity of burning the men-of-war and other vessels, when it should be evident they were become useless to themselves. I do not, however, blame Genl Sullivan for not having made more early preparations; he had done all on his part that time and circumstances would permit, and is allowed to be an active as well as a brave officer. The Count did everything that could indicate his extreme desire to accomplish the views of the American general. He stood upon no ceremonies; he gave him a faithful account of the embarrassments of the squadron, from the want of water and provisions, and acted upon all occasions with a most engaging frankness and condescension.

The attack being suspended, the Count D'Estaing took measures to make himself master of the East and West passages of Conanicut and Rhode Island. The "Fantasque" and the "Sagittaire" entered the latter, and obliged the enemy to burn the "Orpheus," the "Juno," and the "Lark," of 32 guns; the "Cerberus," of 28; the Brigantine the "Pigot," and two transports. At the same time, the frigates "L'Alcmene" and "L'Amiable," having entered the East passage, the "Kingfisher," of 20 guns, the "Spitfire," of 10, and the "Lamb," of 6, were also burnt.

On the 8th of August the French squadron entered Newport, through the fire of all its batteries, and made preparations for landing 4000 men to act in conjunction with the troops of Genl Sullivan, when the enemy set fire to the "Grand Duke," a ship of two tier and sunk before the town, the "Flora," of 32 guns, with about 15 transports. The Britons had reason to regret so large a destruction of their vessels. On the 9th, Genl Sullivan acquainted the Count D'Estaing that the enemy, astonished by his entrance into Newport, had abandoned their posts on the north part of Rhode Island, and had given him an oppertunity of easily landing his army from the Continent in that quarter; and that, without waiting for the day that had been agreed upon, he had already made his descent upon the Island, tho, having at that time but 2000 men with him, he should want immediate aid.

The Count, tho' again disappointed, and not in the most favourable situation for a sudden and unexpected operation, knowing that even moments are to be improved in war, took every measure instantly for the service of the common cause, and ordered the seamen and soldiers he had landed on Conanicut to follow him to Rh: Island. In that moment, and without any previous intimation, the fleet of Admiral Howe was discovered approaching the harbour of Newport. It consisted of 36 sail, 14 of which were of 2 tier of guns, and came to anchor before R. Island. This arrival answered the hopes of the enemy, and frustrated the enterprise of the allies against Newport. The zeal of the Count D'Estaing to accommodate himself to the disadvantageous circumstances of this expedition, which he could not avoid, rendered him less prepared for such an event. His squadron was divided for the service of different stations: two ships of the line were without; two others in the west channel; three

frigates, which were all he then had, and a brigantine, were at a distance in the East channel. It had not been in his power to fortify the Island of Conanicut without disarming his ships. This island was an advantageous post that the British Admiral might have taken possession of with his troops. The Count must then have found himself between two fires from the land, to one or other of which his ships would have been greatly exposed at a time when he might expect to combat a squadron furnished with bomb-vessels, fireships, and everything necessary to render it vastly superior in strength to his own. In this hazardous situation, the Count and his officers, without complaining of those events which had brought them into it, and which certainly could not be imputed to them, prepared with alacrity and ardor to encounter the difficulties with which they were surrounded. Fortunately, on the morning of the 10th of August, a fresh wind from the North, which rarely happens at that season, gave them an oppertunity to go out and meet the British squadron. Uncertain as they then were of the exact force of this squadron, which had been joined by a ship of 74 guns from that of Admiral Byron, and which they had reason to apprehend was much superior to their own; uncertain whether the favourable wind might not change and leave their ships exposed to the British batteries, which had wounded them in their entrance, they were determined to pursue their hopes of coming up with the enemy. Accordingly, they cut their cables, and passed in a single defile through a much severer and better served fire than the former. Admiral Howe cut his own cables, also, but it was to flee. Every effort was made by the French Admiral to overtake him; and on the 11th, when the Count had approached the rear of the British fleet and was preparing to attack it, a wind arose that by separating the two squadrons at

once deprived him of a promised victory, and America of the brightest prospect she had beheld during the war.

In this storm, which lasted three days, the Admiral's ship, the "Languedoc," totally dismasted and her rudder broken, found herself alone upon the sea and reduced almost to an immovable mass. The "Marseilles," of 74 guns, suffered at the same time greatly, tho' not equally with the "Languedoc." The "Cesar," of the same force, was also separated from the fleet, and had a severe and bloody engagement with a British man-of-war, the fruits of which she was prevented from reaping by the approach of several ships of the enemy. Such events in naval affairs human prudence indeed cannot prevent, but the firmness of the Count D'Estaing knew how to support and repair. Having collected the greater part of his squadron, the necessity of immediately making for some port where he might obtain adequate supplies, and his shattered ship be repaired in the best and most expeditious manner, appeared indispensable. This could not be expected at Newport; Boston was upon all accounts the most convenient place for such a purpose; and to that harbour the wishes of the whole fleet in their present exigencies were directed. But the Count D'Estaing had given his word to return to Rhode Island; and was desirous to explain to our forces there the situation of the fleet and the measures it unavoidably obliged him to take. He hoped at the same time that his appearance again before Newport, tho' he could remain there but a very short time, might disconcert the enemy, and facilitate either an immediate attack upon the place, if it was practicable, or an early retreat of our forces. In vain was it suggested to the Count that such a step could be of no important service to the American army, and would only increase the difficulty of repairing to Boston. In vain was he

reminded that part, at least, and probably the whole of Byron's fleet had arrived on these coasts. He fulfilled his word, and in doing so he performed the last service it was in his power to render to the Army of the United States employed against Newport. Had he remained there, from the vast superiority of the united British squadron, the raising the siege of that place might have been accompanied with the loss of his whole fleet. Upon his arrival at Boston, such was his condescension, such his zeal for the common cause, that he offered to go with his handful of troops and serve in person under General Sullivan.

The uncommon prudence of the Count D'Estaing while he remained upon these coasts, amidst all his well-known courage and martial fire, happily served to establish and cultivate the new alliance at a very critical time. It employed his ships in the best manner, and for the most essential services that circumstances would allow. It brought them all collected to these shores, after a long and difficult voyage, while those of Admiral Byron were scattered, and arrived one after another. It conducted them in safety through many dangers upon a coast new to the Count and his officers, and on which the Britons lost the "St. Alban" and other ships of importance. It finally eluded Admiral Byron, who with a superior force watched the departure of the French fleet to the West Indies, and without being able to give it the least disturbance, lost the "Shrewsbury" on the shore of Cape Cod. Thus did the vigilance and firmness of the Count D'Estaing, after he had done so much for the common cause in this quarter, preserve his squadron for the most important services in another. Upon these I do not mean to enter, confining myself to those performed here in 1778.

The very sound of his coming to our aid occasioned the

evacuation of Philadelphia by the British army; his presence suspended the operation of a vast British force in these States by sea and land; it animated our own efforts; it protected our coasts and navigation, obliging the enemy to keep their men-of-war and cruisers collected, and facilitated our necessary supplies from abroad. By drawing the powerful squadron of Admiral Byron to these seas, it gave security to the Islands of France in the West Indies, an equilibrium to her naval power in the Channel, and a decided superiority in the Mediterranean. These services of the Count D'Estaing, however his subsequent ones may be thought to surpass them in brilliancy, can never be forgotten in France and America; the annals of both nations will do justice to them, and consecrate to fame the distinguished character and actions of this great commander.

CHAPTER XI.

THE AMERICAN PRISONERS.

THE first correspondence in regard to the exchange of Prisoners is well known. We publish it again that it may be read in connection with papers not hitherto printed.

The Commissioners to Lord Stormont.

PARIS, Feb. 23, 1777.

MY LORD, — Captain Wickes of the Reprisal frigate, belonging to the United States of America, has now in his hands near 100 British seamen, prisoners. He desires to know whether an exchange may be made with him for an equal number of American seamen, now prisoners in England. We take the liberty of proposing this matter to your lordship and of requesting your opinion, if there is no impropriety in your giving it, whether such an exchange will probably be agreed to by your court. If your people cannot be soon exchanged here, they will be sent to America.

We have the honour to be, etc.

Stormont paid no attention to this letter. The Commissioners did not entirely give up the hope of doing something. They drafted another letter to Lord Stormont, but it does not appear that it was ever sent.

April, 1777.

To the right honourable Lord Stormont:

Sir, My Lord, — Our last letter, to which we have not the honor of your answer, was on the subject of the exchange of prisoners; we conceive it must be the wish of every friend to humanity to alleviate as far as possible the calamities of war, by treating those who have the misfortune to be made prisoners, agreeable to the rules established, and generally observed by civilized nations; and it gives us much concern to find that many of the subjects of the United States who have been made prisoners of war by his Britannic Majesty's forces have been treated in a manner which is inconsistent with those rules, and unbecoming the character which the British nation hath hitherto maintained. Many prisoners taken at Quebec and on the seas have been cruelly treated, loaded with irons, and after suffering the severest indignities and insults, sent to the coast of Africa, and to the East Indies, to wear out life in servitude, beyond a possibility of the least relief or succor from their families and friends. We are far from believing that His Britannic Majesty or his Ministers have ordered or will countenance such a cruel mode of treating prisoners of war as must not only justify the severest retaliation, but render it necessary. We flatter ourselves therefore that you will represent this conduct to your court, and use your influence to obtain the return and exchange of those unhappy men, and to prevent such treatment of prisoners hereafter as cannot but produce the most disagreeable consequences. We attend your reply, and meantime have the honor to be, etc.

Another of the same tenor was, however, sent, which Stormont acknowledged in the following well-known words: "The King's Ambassador receives no applications from rebels, unless they come to implore his Majesty's

mercy." The Commissioners, justly irate, closed the correspondence by returning this paper to him. "In answer to a letter," they wrote, "which concerns some of the most material interests of humanity, and of the two nations, Great Britain and the United States of America, now at war, we received the enclosed indecent paper, as coming from your Lordship, which we return for your Lordship's more mature consideration."

It is not surprising that the English did not, for various reasons, incline at this period to treat with the Commissioners for an exchange of prisoners. On theoretical grounds, rather roughly hinted at by Lord Stormont in his concise epistle already quoted, it was held that the Americans confined in England were not prisoners-of-war. They were every one of them confined upon a writ issued by some magistrate for high treason, and while they were held as such no offers for a cartel could succeed. The ministry were not at present inclined to allow that the Americans had a right to be treated as belligerents, nor that prisoners made from them could stand in the character of prisoners-of-war. This position, it now goes without saying, was untenable, and it was soon abandoned. The Americans were belligerents, whether they were recognized as a nation or not; and the view that the American prisoners were guilty of high treason was dropped. On practical grounds, too, we may imagine that the British did not see the wisdom of an exchange at this moment. They had their prisoners safe under lock and key at Forton Prison, Portsmouth, and Mill Prison at Plymouth. As their ships-of-war and private armed vessels brought in captured sailors, they turned them at once into a safe place, where they would do no harm. The Americans, on the other hand, made their prisoners at sea, and brought them into French ports. As long as they kept them on board ship, they were prisoners-

of-war; when they set them ashore, they were no longer so. Now, it is easy to see that the Americans could not keep more than a very small number of prisoners on board their ships, and the French would by no means permit them to be lodged on shore. The only thing for the Americans to do with them was to exchange them or to let them go. Very naturally, under these conditions, the first of these alternatives was refused them, and the second was accepted. They discharged large numbers of prisoners, — usually on a pledge that the prisoner discharged would be responsible for the release of an American prisoner. The British Admiralty naturally refused to take cognizance of such pledges, and the British seamen were practically set free with no equivalent. This seemed very hard to Franklin, but it was nothing more than the fortune of war. But as soon as an alliance with France had rendered it possible for the Americans to stow their prisoners somewhere, or at least to keep them safely, with more ease than when their cruisers were exposed to the vigorous surveillance of the neutral power, the English became more ready to treat on the subject. We shall see the first cartel-ship did not reach France till a whole year after the treaty, but it does not appear that this delay was owing to other causes than are usual in a business of this sort.

There were not very many of these prisoners, — less than a thousand,[1] we should say, — but they made a good deal of stir, and form an important element in Franklin's

[1] Franklin states the number to have been 410, in a letter dated Feb. 13, 1780. Jones, writing in Holland in November, 1779, fixed the number as about 500.

To this we must add 100 exchanged in March, 1779, 100 exchanged in August, 1779, about 60 who escaped Sept. 7, 1778, and about 60 more who escaped with Conyngham, Nov. 3, 1779, — which would give 730 as a minimum at this time. Franklin, in a letter dated Jan. 25, 1779, says, "It seems they [the English] cannot give up the pleasure of having at the

achievements in France. With real pity for the sufferings of these men, which were extreme,[1] and considering probably that it was useless to apply to persons in power, he wrote to Hartley in the fall of 1777, stating with some warmth the plight of the prisoners and asking if he would not take into his hands the distribution among those who needed it most of a sum of money, or failing that, if he would not engage somebody else to do so; and somewhat later he writes: —

Having received no answer to the above nor to another letter sent by the same conveyance to another person, I conclude they have miscarried; and we have requested the bearer, Mr. Thornton, to visit your gaols, and bring us a true account of the situation of the American prisoners, believing it too much to request of you during the session of Parliament. When you see his account, you will judge in what manner the relief I requested you to make can best be given, and whether you can make any use of this account in Parliament favourable to these

end of the war 1000 Americans to hang for high treason." The number was probably somewhere between the two figures.

[1] "As to the prisoners who were kept in England, their penury and distress was undoubtedly great and was much increased by the fraud and cruelty of those who were entrusted with the government and supply of their prisons. For these persons, who indeed never had any orders for ill-treatment of the prisoners or countenance in it, having, however, not been overlooked with the utmost vigilance, besides their peculiar prejudices and natural cruelty, considered their offices only as lucrative jobs, which were created merely for their emolument. Whether there was not some exaggeration, as usually there is, in these accounts, it is certain that, though the subsistence allowed them by government would indeed have been sufficient, if honestly administered, to have sustained human nature, in respect to the mere article of food, yet the want of clothes, firing, and bedding, with all the other various articles which custom or nature render conducive to health and comfort, became particularly insupportable in the extremity of the winter." — Annual Register for 1778, p. 78.

unhappy people. The French officers among them are highly exasperated, and are daily exasperating their country by their representations of your barbarity. I enclose you a little specimen that has been communicated to me.

Hartley, ever anxious to do anything which might lessen the breach between the two countries, which he fondly hoped himself to help heal, was willing and ready to co-operate. He writes Christmas-day, 1777: —

"A correspondence set on foot with a view of procuring relief to the unfortunate prisoners on each side, and of setting a new example of benevolence in the world, — to civilize even the laws of war when the case will admit, — is not only irreproachable, but stands in the highest degree of humanity and merit. Such a proposition recommends itself to a reception with a double share of goodwill and alacrity, not only for the humanity of the immediate object, the softening the rigours of captivity, but likewise for the further and more enlarged view of consequences by introducing one act of communication between this country and America which shall not be a matter of exasperation. Mutual acts of generosity and benevolence may soften animosities, and by disposing the respective parties to a favourable opinion of each other, may contribute to bring forward some reasonable plan of accommodation. Upon these views and principles I have made application to Lord North that the two parties shall mutually send or employ a commisary to take care of the unfortunate prisoners. I did my endeavour to recommend it to Government as a national act of generosity and liberality, to be avowed as such, in preference to any private subscription for their relief, however large or munificent, from a full conviction (whatever may be the fate of

war) that acts of national kindness and generosity alone can make any impression upon the heart of America. I am now expecting with anxiety the event of my application, which I will subjoin to this as soon as I receive it. Mr. Thornton's visit to the prisoners will be very much to your satisfaction. You will have heard of a very large private subscription for the immediate relief of the prisoners, which does honour to the humanity of individuals. If government will consent to the proposed permanent establishment in their favour I shall consider it as an auspicious omen."

Later in the winter he writes again. There was still no talk of exchange; for the French alliance now close at hand was still thought far off by the administration, and they were in no mind to give up the advantages which they had in the matter.

GOLDEN SQUARE, February 3, 1778.

DEAR SIR, — The enclosed letters will explain themselves. Mr. Wren is a very worthy man (I believe a dissenting minister) at Portsmouth, who has devoted his attention in the most charitable manner towards the relief of the prisoners at Forton. When Mr. Thornton went to Forton I advanced him £50, according to your desire. If you approve the continuance of his plan, I can easily transact it here in concurrence with Mr. Wren. I suppose by Mr. Wren's letters that the whole of the dinners may come to 4 or 5 guineas a week. If, therefore, you will transmit 100£ to me by any banker or merchant, we shall have 8 or 10 weeks in hand, and when that is expended I will transmit to you the account. Mr. Thornton's visit and donation to the poor prisoners was most acceptable; for it was before the subscription was very popular, and gave them, I believe, about 40 or 50£. In

tobacco, tea, sugar, &c., they are very comfortably appointed now. I will write again soon; I have not time to write more by this packet, but I cannot quit this paper without subjoining one earnest caution and request. Let nothing ever persuade America to throw themselves into the arms of France. Times may mend. I hope they will. An American must always be a stranger in France; Great Britain may for ages to come be their home.

Yours most affectly, D. H.

This letter was written only three days before the Treaty of Alliance was signed, and some time after the Treaty of Commerce had been signed. Neither, however, had been acknowledged. In March the treaties were publicly acknowledged, and war began between France and England. About this time (April 29) Hartley visited Paris, with the idea of talking with Franklin on the topic of Peace. It is, however, not improbable that he told Franklin that the ministry had held out to him expectations of arranging an exchange of prisoners. On his return the following correspondence began: —

Franklin to Hartley.

Passy, May 25, 1778.

Dear Sir, — I am glad to learn by the newspapers that you got safe home, where I hope you found all well.

I wish to know whether your ministers have yet come to a resolution to exchange the prisoners they hold in England, according to the expectations formerly given you. We have here above two hundred, who are confined in the "Drake," where they must be kept, as we have not the use of prisons on shore, and where they cannot be so conveniently accommodated as we could wish. But as the liberal discharge we have given to near 500 prisoners

taken on your coasts has wrought no disposition to similar returns, we shall keep these and all we take hereafter, till your counsels become more reasonable. We have accounts from the Mill Prison at Plymouth that our people are not allowed the use of pen and ink, nor the sight of newspapers, nor the conversation of friends. Is it true?

Be so good as to mention to me whether the two little bills I gave you on Nesbit and Vaughan are accepted and paid, and the sums of each, as I have omitted to make a note of them. Permit me to repeat my thankful acknowledgements for the very humane and kind part you have acted in this affair. If I thought it necessary I would pray God to bless you for it. But I know he will do so without my prayers.

Adieu, and believe me ever

B. F.

Hartley to Franklin.

Golden Square, May 29, 1778.

Dear Sir, — Yours received this moment of the 25th instant by Mr. Parker. I will apply for the exchange of the prisoners without delay and will press the point as much as I can; which in truth I have done many times since I saw you, but official departments move slowly here. A promise of 5 months is yet unperformed. The enclosed letters came to me but yesterday, though they are dated April 7th. Mr. Wren writ me that several of the prisoners have similar requests to make. The two bills which you sent me were upon Nesbit 15£ 15*s.* 0*d.*, drawn by Wm. Parsons, which I sent to my banker, and he sent me for answer that he had offered the bill at Nesbit's and that they returned for answer, "Ignoramus." The other bill is upon Vaughan, for 21£, which has not yet been sent for acceptance.

Hartley to Franklin.

GOLDEN SQUARE, June 5, 1778.

DEAR SIR,— I hope we shall at length get forward with the exchange of the poor prisoners which has been so many months in negociation. I am authorized by the administration and the board of Admiralty to make the following proposition: That you should send to me the number and rank of the prisoners which you have on your side to deliver, upon which an equal number shall be prepared on this side for the exchange. It is proposed that each party shall send their prisoners to Calais, and that the exchange be made there. The port of Calais is chosen as the most unexceptionable for the admission of an English ship upon such an occasion.

Be so good as to send me your answer upon this proposition, which I will lay before the Board of Admiralty, and will contribute all that is in my power to facilitate the exchange.

Franklin to Hartley.

PASSY, June 16th, 1778.

SIR, — I received yours of the 5th instant, acquainting us that the ministry have at length agreed to an exchange of prisoners. We shall write to Captain Jones for the list required, which will be sent you as soon as received. We understand there are at least two hundred. We desire and expect that the number of ours shall be taken from Forton and Plymouth, in proportion to the number in each place, and to consist of those who have been longest in confinement,— it being not only equitable that they should be first, but this method will prevent all suspicions that you pick out the worst and weakest of our people, to give in exchange for your good ones. If you think proper to

clear your prisoners at once, and give us all our people, we give you our solemn engagement, which we are sure will be punctually executed, to deliver to Lord Howe in America, or to his order, a number of your sailors equal to the surplus, as soon as the agreement arrives there.

There is one thing more which we desire may be observed. We shall note in our lists the names and numbers of those taken in the service of the King, distinguishing them from those taken in the merchant's service; that in the exchange to be made you may give adequate number of those taken in the service of the States, and of our merchants. This will prevent any uneasiness among your navy men and ours, if the seamen of merchantmen are exchanged before them. As it will be very troublesome and expensive, as well as fatiguing to them, to march our people from Brest to Calais, we may endeavour to get leave for your ship to come to the road of Brest to receive them there; or, if that cannot be, we must desire from your Admiralty a passport for the ship that is to convey them from Brest to Calais. If you have any of our people still prisoners on board your ships of war, we request they may be put into the prisons, to take their chance of exchange with the rest.

Hartley to Franklin.

GOLDEN SQUARE, July 10, 1778.

DEAR SIR, — I only write you one line just to tell you that I have received no answer yet from the Admiralty relative to yours of June the 16th. I have applied several times, but I suppose they are employed about other matters. You may be assured that no reiteration shall be wanting on my side, but I cannot command an answer. The affair which happened off Brest and its consequences has, I presume, occupied the attention of the Admiralty.

I shall do my best to obtain all the objects mentioned in yours of the 16th. I wish it may be with success. I shall write again to you soon. Believe me always to be a friend to Peace and to the rights of mankind, and most affectionately yours.

Hartley to Franklin.

Golden Square, July 11, 1778.

Dear Sir, — I have the following answers to make to you from the Board of Admiralty in relation to yours of the 16th June. The Prisoners to be exchanged from hence will be taken from Forton and Plymouth in proportion to their numbers in each place, and to consist of those who have been the longest in confinement. As to the distinction of the seamen taken in the merchant service or in the service of the States of America, there is no such distinction in the prisons of Forton and Plymouth. They are all detained there under commitments from some Magistrate as for High Treason; therefore no other distinction can be followed in their exchange but seniority as to their confinement. As to the passport for the ship which is to convoy the prisoners from Brest to Calais, I am authorized to say that it will be granted, if you will give me assurance that our ship going to Calais shall have free entrance without molestation and free [blank] with the Prisoners in exchange. There is but one point more in yours which I have not yet proposed to the Board of Admiralty, viz., the general clearing of our Prisons at once, upon your engagement to deliver an equal number in America to the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy or his order. I shall recommend this step very strongly to the Board, and for that reason I chose to make it a separate proposition, and not to embarrass it with other details. I have several times proposed such a step to different members

of the administration, long before you made it as a request to me. I shall now make a written proposition of it in form.

To a letter of 14th July (a copy of the above), is added:

I wish everything that may tend to soften the minds of the parties to each other to procure peace. You know the terms I would recommend. I am convinced that the people of the two countries are not alienated from each other, and in my opinion nothing could be a compensation to either of them if they should ever become so. I will never remit the utmost of my poor endeavours to restore peace.

Franklin to Hartley.

Passy, July 13, 1778.

Dear Sir, — Inclosed is the list of our prisoners, which by an accident was long in coming to us. There are supposed to be about 15 more remaining in the hospital, whose names we have not yet obtained, and about as many who being recovered of their wounds have been suffered to go home to England. If you continue in the opinion of making the exchange at Calais, you will send us the papers necessary to secure the vessel that shall transport the men from the ports where they are to that place against capture; as the marching them thither would be attended with great inconveniences, and many of them might desert on the way, from an apprehension of being put on board men of war on their arrival in England.

Franklin to Hartley.

Passy, Sept. 14, 1778.

Dear Sir, — I now send you the passport required. I postponed answering your last in hopes of obtaining it

sooner, but tho' it was long since agreed to, much business in the Admiralty Department here has, I suppose, occasioned its delay. The port of Calais was not approved of, and I think the ports mentioned (Nantes or L'Orient) are better for you as well as for us, not only as being nearer to Plymouth, but as many of your sailors would probably have found opportunities of deserting in the long march from Brest to Calais, they being afraid of the press. I understand that upwards of 80 more of your people have been brought by ours prisoners into France since the list I sent you, but I cannot now send you their names. You have not mentioned whether the proposition of sending us the whole of those in your prisons was agreed to. If it is, you may rely on our sending immediately all that come to our hands for the future; or we will give you your option, an order for the balance to be delivered to your fleet in America. By putting a little confidence in one another, we may thus diminish the miseries of war. To make the expense of these exchanges more equal, if another cartel ship should be hereafter necessary, we hereby promise to send to England at our charge; and so it may continue to be done alternately as long as the war continues.

The affair hung fire in the most vexatious manner. Franklin had hoped to make a general clearance of the prisons before winter. He wrote, as follows, to some prisoners in answer to a letter he received from them: —

Passy, September 19, 1778.

Gentlemen, — Altho' we have not written to you directly for some time, you may be assured we have not been unmindful of your interests, your comfort, or your liberty. We have been engaged a long time in negotiating

a cartel of exchange. This work we found to be attended with many difficulties, but at last have obtained assurances from England that an exchange shall take place. We have also obtained, from the government of this kingdom, a passport for a vessel to come from England to Nantes or L'Orient, with American prisoners, then to take in English prisoners in exchange. We now sincerely hope that you will obtain your liberty. We cannot certainly say, however, that all shall be immediately exchanged, because we fear we have not an equal number to send to England; those to remain, if any, will be those who have been the latest in captivity and consequently have suffered the least.

While the British Government refused to make agreement of exchange, the Commissioners here never discouraged their countrymen from escaping from the prisons in England,[1] but on the contrary, have lent small sums of money, sufficient with great economy to bear their expenses to some seaport, to such as have made their way hither. But if the British government should honourably keep to their agreement to make regular exchanges, we shall not think it consistent with the honor of the United States to encourage such escapes, or to give any assistance to such as shall escape. Such escapes hereafter would have a tendency to excite the British administration to depart from the cartel, to treat the prisoners that remain with more rigour, and to punish those that escape, if re-taken, with more severity.

On the other hand, we have now obtained permission of this government to put all British prisoners, whether taken by Continental frigates or by privateers, into the King's prisons; and we are determined to treat such pris-

[1] On the 7th of September fifty-seven of the prisoners had escaped from Forton. — Annual Register for 1778, p. 200.

oners precisely as our countrymen are treated in England, to give them the same allowance of provisions and accommodations and no other. We therefore request you to inform us with exactness what your allowance is from government, that we may govern ourselves accordingly.

We have the honour to be with much respect and affection,

Your countrymen and very humble servants.

To the American Prisoners in Forton, Plymouth,
or elsewhere in Great Britain.

He received the following letter from Forton: —

Forton Prison (Gosport), Oct^r 2d, 1778.

Sir, — Having been buoyed up with the hopes of an exchange for six or seven months, we began to surmise the reason why it was so long delayed was owing to a non-conformity on the part of the British Ministry. Yet they disclaim the charge, alledging that they have complyed with every requisite on their part, and that the completion of it rests wholly with you; yet, as we put no great confidence in them, we wish to hear the truth from yourself, which will give us infinite satisfaction. The remembrance of our sufferings last winter not being yet erased from our minds, raises great anxieties in us as the ensuing winter approaches. We wish not to be continued another winter, if terms for our relief can be accommodated. We, the subscribers, are therefore commissioned by the rest of our brother prisoners (officers and men) in the name and behalf of the whole to address you on this (to us) very interesting subject, humbly begging a speedy and official answer, as also your speady interposition if anything can be done to relieve us from our most disagreeable situation.

In the greatest confidence of your favour, we have the honour to subscribe ourselves your most obed^{t} hble servts.,

Lt. Col. Winbert.
Joseph Lunt.
Edward MacKellar.

Franklin to Hartley.

Passy, Oct. 20, 1778.

Dear Sir, — I received your favour of the 9th instant with a copy of the letter from the Admiralty Office, relative to the proposed exchange of prisoners, in which the precise number of those we have here is desired. I cannot at present give it you, they being disposed in different ports; and indeed it will always be difficult to be precise in it, the number continually changing by new prisoners brought in, and some escaping. I think the list I formerly sent you was near 200 [N. B. (by Hartley). In July they were about 258 and some mast men], — according to the list then sent, which I transmitted to the Admiralty in July last; since which, sixty odd have been brought into France from the North Seas by Capt. McNeil, and some by others of our cruisers; and I just now hear that we have near an hundred more in Spain, taken by one of our privateers in two New York packets, one going thither, the other returning, 88 of which are officers of your army. I wish their Lordships could have seen it well to exchange upon account; but though they may not think it safe trusting to us, we shall make no difficulty in trusting to them. And to expedite the exchange, and save the time that obtaining a correct list would require, we make this proposition, — that if their Lordships will send us over 250 of our people, we will deliver all we have in France. If the number we have falls short of the 250, the cartel-ship

may take back as many of those she brings as the deficiency amounts to, delivering no more than she receives. If our number exceeds the 250, we will deliver them all nevertheless, their Lordships promising to send us immediately, a number equal to the surplus. We would thus wish to commence, by this first advance, that mutual confidence which it would be for the good of mankind that nations should maintain honourably with each other, tho engaged in war. I hope this will remove all obstructions to a speedy completion of the business, as the winter approaches, and the poor prisoners on both sides may suffer in it extremely.

Franklin to Hartley.

Passy, Nov. 29, 1778.

Dear Sir, — I have heard nothing from you lately concerning the exchange of the prisoners. Is that affair dropt? Winter is coming on apace. I understand that your charitable contribution is near expended, and not likely to be renewed. Many of those unfortunate people must suffer greatly. I wish to have a line from you, informing me what may be depended on. I am as ever,

B. F.

Hartley to Franklin.

London, Dec. 10, 1778.

My Dear Friend, — I recd two days ago notice of the admiralty that the last terms which I transmitted from you were accepted and agreed to, and that his Majesty had consented. I was likewise told that I might expect in a few days to receive special notice of the place and time of the exchange. As soon as I receive any such notice, I will not delay a moment in advertising you. I hear, as you do, that the subscription for the prisoners is

nearly exhausted. I have had several interviews with the Gentlemen who have had the management of that subscription and I have pressed very strongly upon the renewal, notwithstanding the present prospect of exchanges, as more prisoners may come or unexpected delays may happen.

Yours affectly, D. H.

P. S. Sometimes I write longer letters than this.

Franklin to Hartley.

Passy, Jan. 25, 1779.

Dear Sir, — I a long time believed that your government were in earnest in agreeing to an exchange of prisoners. I begin now to think I was mistaken. It seems they cannot give up the pleasing idea of having at the end of the war 1000 Americans to hang for high treason. You were also long of opinion that the animosity against America was not national or general; but having seen the exterminating proclamation of the Commissioners approved by King, Lords, and Commons, and that not attended with any marks of popular disapprobation, perhaps you too begin to think you were mistaken. I thank you for writing those excellent letters to your constituents. I like all but your reflections against the King of France for assisting us. In my mind, the coming to the relief of an innocent people under the bloody oppression your ministers were exercising over them, and exposing himself and nation to a war on their account, was not only what any prince had a right to do for the sake of common humanity, but was a magnanimous and heroic action, that is admired at present by the wise and good through all Europe, and will hand his name down with glory to posterity. Our different ways of thinking in this particular will not,

however, diminish our private friendship, nor impair the sentiments of sincere esteem and respect with which I am ever, dear sir,

Yours, B. F.

Franklin to Hartley.

Passy, Feb. 22, 1779.

Dear Sir, — I received your favor of Jany 23, containing the answer you had received from the board of sick and hurt, in which they say they are taking measures for the immediate sending to France the number of Americans first proposed to be changed, etc. I have heard nothing since of the measures taken. The prisoners grow more and more uneasy with us. They are told that we neglect them. We sent the passport required in September last. We were soon after assured that a transport was actually taken up and victualled for 100 men, to be sent to France with so many prisoners. That vessel has never appeared. We rely'd on the agreement to exchange, and the promise of doing it speedily. And we advised our people thereupon not to attempt escapes. We seem to have been deceived or trifled with: but perhaps it is rather owing to the multiplicity of business the board has on its hands, and your important occupations not permitting you to follow it with such frequent solicitations as are necessary to keep up its attention to this particular affair. I have therefore thought of sending over a person for that purpose, impowering him to stipulate in my behalf what may be proper to remove little obstacles readily, without the delay attending letters. By this means I would save you some of that trouble which your goodness and humanity might otherwise continue to lead you into. I would only desire you at present to

procure a safe conduct for the person; his name is Edward Bancroft. He is a gentleman of character and honour, who will punctually observe such restrictions respecting his conduct when in England as it may be thought reasonable to lay him under. If this is or is not obtainable I beg you will signify it by a line directed for him at M. Leveauxs, Merchant in Calais; and that as soon as possible, that he may not be fruitlessly detained long there in expectation of it.

This proposal to send Dr. Bancroft would have, without doubt, much facilitated matters. The method of exchange by means of commissaries is, we believe, generally in use to-day. But Hartley seems to have entirely misconceived the object. As we understand it, Bancroft was to reside at London as commissary for the American Government, who might obviate the difficulties naturally experienced in continually sending over to Paris on every point. But Hartley imagined that Bancroft's mission was merely to superintend the actual exchange; and rightly enough conceived that so simple a business needed no especial superintendence. So he wrote to Bancroft to that effect, and also to Franklin.

Hartley to Franklin.

London, March 30, 1779.

Dear Sir, — Yours of March 21st received. I have in my own private thoughts been very much displeased with the affair of the exchange of prisoners. I had, before the receipt of yours, made some strong remonstrances upon the subject, and yesterday I went again to the Admiralty with my complaints. Mr. Stephens, the Secretary, did assure me, upon his honor, that the delays had been unavoidable; that the transport was beat back twice or I

think three times, between the Downs and Plymouth; that so far from any wish of delay, they had appointed a lieutenant to command the cartel ship and not a trading owner, who might be tempted to make a job of delay. He gave me such full assurances of the intentions of government that I really hope they mean to proceed with the quickest dispatch. You may be assured I will do everything in my power to press them on. Every incident, both great and small, concur, in my opinion, to make peace most desirable. I know full well that our wishes are in perfect unison, and I assure you that my thoughts and labours are constantly employed upon that subject. If any favourable moment should happen, even of any chance of *talking* about peace, I am constantly upon the watch. The principles alone upon which I shall act (if ever I should have the opportunity of putting my good wishes into action) are confidence, certainty, national safety, and honour.

P. S. The following note just this moment received from the Admiralty: —

"Mr. Stephens presents compts to Mr. Hartley, and acquaints him that the Milford Cartel ship sailed the 25th instant from Plymouth with American prisoners for France."

The prisoners arrived in due course and were acknowledged in a postscript[1] to one of Franklin's letters to Hartley,

"The first cargo of prisoners is arrived and exchanged; I have not heard that the Milford is sailed. There have been abundance of high winds lately which perhaps have

[1] Which Mr. Sparks curiously enough left unprinted, though he printed the letter. See vol. viii. p. 345.

prevented. Accept my thanks for your unwearied pains in that affair. Let me know, if you can, whether it is intended to send another hundred immediately. In that case I would assemble from the different prisons those who are to be returned for them that the cartel ship may find them ready, and not be obliged to wait for them. We have still a greater number in Spain.

"P. S. I suppose the money put into your hands for the prisoners is expended. Please to let me know; and also inform me whether two small bills I gave you were ever paid."

CHAPTER XII.

HARTLEY'S DESIRES FOR PEACE.

FRANKLIN and the United States had in the English Parliament throughout the Revolutionary War, at least one sturdy friend, who, had his powers been equal to his desires, would have performed wonders in behalf of the rebellious Colonies. The name of David Hartley is familiar to all readers of Franklin's letters of this period, as one who, through good and bad report, was ever ready and willing to lend his aid, such as it was, to any efforts that might be on foot for a reconciliation between the two parties of the "most unnatural war," as he himself alludes to the struggle. He was a member of Parliament, one of Franklin's old friends in London, and the reader will remember that it was through his efforts that some end was reached in the business of exchanging those wretched Americans who were languishing in Forton and Mill prisons. But Hartley, as is well known, was not one of the leading powers in Parliament. On the whole identified with the opposition, yet upon fair terms with Lord North and the ministry, he could have been listened to with pleasure by neither, if we may judge of his eloquence from the snatches of speeches which are preserved for us in the lively pages of Hansard, or from the innumerable and lengthy letters with which he favored the American Minister at Paris. Hartley was decidedly not one of those who have the God-given faculty to be a leader of men;

but what he could do he was willing and eager to perform. And after Franklin had been in France no very great time, after Burgoyne's defeat and during the negotiations for the French Treaty, he thought that it would be not impossible that some accommodation might be reached.

"You know," he writes, "that from the beginning of these unfortunate disputes I have always kept my eye upon every possible change of reconciliation and peace. I have wished to have had some specific propositions from America. It has been a great argument against all propositions which have been made in Parliament, 'How do we know that if we were content to receive such or such propositions upon your recommendation, that America would accede to them? What assurances on that head can you give?' The objection has weakened the effect of proposals for peace even in the minds of many people who were well disposed, and who would perhaps have stretched a point if they could have been assured of peace in consequence. The events of war do so affect the claims and pretensions of parties that we lose every fixed point. *Dum loquimur tempus fugit.* We should therefore settle some point of departure. Even in the buying of an horse, if all things are afloat, a man does not know himself what he would give or what to offer; but if a price is fixed, the difficulty is reduced to the difference between the buyer and the seller. If I stretch a point, I shall have the finest horse in the country. I know his pedigree to be good, and why should I let him go into the hands of a stranger who would neither know his value nor use him well? I can easily suppose that objections may occur to making explicitly the first propositions. So it is in all treaties; but still there may be found reasonable and impartial people to conceive something like the terms that the parties might meet upon in the nature of preliminaries. Perhaps

a friend might suggest a proposition, to lay a foundation in good-will, even previous to preliminaries, viz., that whenever or whatever terms are finally settled, it shall be understood that the two countries shall always be mutually naturalized, that every person born in either country shall be considered as a natural born subject throughout Great Britain and America, as before the troubles. If preliminaries could be so far adjusted as once to settle a suspension of hostilities, there still are strong marks left of a secret lurking affection between the parties, which might smoothen the way to a full and final accommodation. If the points of independence and of the commercial system could be accorded between the parties, as preliminaries in the gross, I should hope that all minute points might be easily and amicably adjusted.

"It frequently happens between contending parties that, meaning the same thing, they lose their object from want of understanding each other. Let them have a talk together. There is no risque in the case; if they fail, they are but where they were; while they keep aloof and shy, they can have no idea how the first concession on either side would open the heart of the other. If it comes to a parly, common friends may easily join their hands.

"There was a time when America wished nothing inconsistent with the dignity and wellfare of the state from which they derive their origin. I hope the same dispositions still continue. Some events which have recently happened give a very high idea of their national character. The present hour is very important. Perhaps you may have seen in the public papers that we are to expect some propositions to settle the troubles in America. Nothing is yet known with respect to these propositions. But if any idea of the dispositions of the other side could be conveyed in trust, some material good towards the great

object of peace might result, if the difference (supposing any) should be thought surmountable. The ballance must, in my opinion, be very great between the scales if peace, thrown in on either side, would not make the other kick the beam, more especially if fundamentals can be once settled. The constancy of your attention to every chance of procuring peace and of forwarding the cause of humanity will always ensure to so respectable a character the truest regard and affection from their friends. This comes from a sincere friend of peace and of peacemakers, and much yours."

We have no direct answer from Franklin to this note. He was, perhaps, busier than Hartley. At any rate, we generally find three letters of the Englishman to one of the American. As a rule, however, Franklin's one letter is better reading than all three of Hartley's put together. Hartley was, we grieve to say, an intolerable proser. Later, however, Franklin did write.

PASSY, Feb. 1, 1778.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,—You desired that if I had no propositions to make, I would at least give advice. I think it is Ariosto who says that all things lost on earth are to be found in the moon; on which somebody remarked that there must be a great deal of good advice in the moon. If so, there is amongst it a good deal of mine, formerly given and lost in this business. I will, however, at your request, give a little more, but without the expectation that it will be followed; for none but God can, at the same time, give good counsel, and wisdom to make use of it.

You have lost by this mad war, and the barbarity with which it has been carried on, not only the government and

commerce of America, and the public revenues and private wealth arising from that commerce, but what is more, you have lost the esteem, respect, friendship, and affection of all that great and growing people; who consider you at present, and whose posterity will consider you, as the worst and wickedest nation upon earth. A peace you may undoubtedly obtain by dropping all your pretensions to govern us; and by your superior skill in huckstering negotiation, you may possibly make such an apparently advantageous treaty as shall be applauded in your Parliament. But if you do not, with the peace, recover the affections of that people, it will not be a lasting nor a profitable one; nor will it afford you any part of that strength which you once had by your union with them, and might, if you had been wise enough to take advice, have still retained.

To recover their respect and affection, you must tread back the steps you have taken. Instead of honouring and rewarding the American advisers and promoters of this war, you should disgrace them, with all those who have inflamed the nation against America, and all the ministers and generals who have prosecuted the war with such inhumanity. This would show a national change of disposition, or a disapprobation of what had passed.

In proposing terms, you should not only grant such as the necessity of your affairs may evidently oblige you to grant, but such additional ones as may show your generosity, and thereby demonstrate your good-will. For instance, perhaps you might by your treaty retain all Canada, Nova Scotia, and the Floridas. But if you would have a real friendly, as well as able ally in America, and avoid occasions of future discord which will otherwise be continually arising on your American frontiers, you should throw in those countries; and you may call it, if you

please, an indemnification for the needless and cruel burning of their towns; which indemnification will otherwise be sometime or other demanded.

I know your people cannot see the utility of such measures, and will never follow them. I have, however, complied with your desire, and am, as ever,

Your affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

At the very time of the signing of the Treaty of Alliance, before the rumor of it had reached London, the ministry had resolved upon schemes of conciliation. On the 17th of February Lord North brought in his two bills, one declaratory regarding taxation, and the other appointing commissioners, with considerable powers, to treat with Congress, the provincial assemblies, Washington, and others. The scheme was received with jeers from the opposition, and with dejection by Lord North's own supporters. But Hartley determined to make the best of it. He wrote the next day to Franklin: —

LONDON, Feb. 18, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR, — I hope in God that no fatal step is yet taken between America and the Court of France[1] which will defeat the hope of a reunion between Great Britain and America. I told you that better times would come. They are come. I hardly can describe to you the substance of what passed in the house of commons last night. Lord North laid before the house an explanation of his propositions, in which he has done justice to those dispositions for peace and for a settlement of America which he expressed in the course of a negotiation upon a

[1] The treaties between France and America were signed on the 6th of this same month.

subordinate point (I mean the affair of the prisoners). There are no specific propositions before the house, but only his explanation of the intent of two bills which are to be brought in. One of the bills is expressly to relinquish the Parliamentary taxation. The other is to appoint Commissioners to treat with any persons whatsoever and upon any topics. I think we understood that they are to be, or in effect at least to be, plenipotentiaries. In short, if the bill corresponds to what has been announced, it will give full powers to the Commissioners for a cessation of hostilities, treaty, peace, and perpetual union with America. The order for bringing the bill passed, *nemine contradicente.* I hope in God that it is not come too late. In my opinion, I do attribute in a great degree the present change of measure in Lord North to the effect of your wise and temperate counsels and of your friendly, I must add your magnanimous, affection to this country, which were conveyed to him on a late occasion. He was possessed of a very high opinion and respect for your person and character, and so I found him upon the opening of our conferences. But when I expressed to him the reality of your character, and that you had stood in the gap to prevent the rupture to the very last point of defence, and that the only hopes of peace rested upon your prudent and temperate management, the manner of his communication with me was totally altered to a full and friendly confidence. He allowed me to read to him my letter to you of the 25th of Decr., which Mr. Thornton brought over to you. He gave me full assurances that I should not be interrupted in any correspondence with you. He told me that I could not serve my country more essentially than by cultivating every intercourse that might forward peace. He expressed his full approbation of my going to Paris to have a conference with you. In short, in everything he expressed

the sincerest dispositions towards Peace, and by his conduct yesterday he has avowed them to the public. If it be still in your power to [blank] the fatal act of final separation, I am confident that peace is now practicable. If this be still in your power, I know no sentiment of the heart that can rival the reward due to yours. That good old man may compose his heart to a blessed rest who leaves behind him peace to his country and to mankind.

Acting on this permission of Lord North's, Hartley visited Franklin. He arrived on Sunday, the 19th, and seems to have stayed until the next Thursday. He was instructed to ask whether America would not, to obtain peace, grant some superior advantages to Britain and enter into an alliance offensive and defensive; and also, should war be declared against France, if we had obliged ourselves to join her against England. Unfortunately, conversation is not preserved for us as are letters. We have no record of what was said by him or by Franklin; but it is improbable that anything passed of importance. Franklin, if we can judge from the tone of his letters, was by no means willing to withdraw a foot from his standpoint,— the moment being as it was the very time of the whole war (before Yorktown) when it seemed most probable that America, with the aid of her two allies, France and Time, would be able to make her own terms of peace.

John Adams, however, considered Hartley as a spy, and Franklin himself wrote to Vergennes that he should avoid such interviews in the future. He thought they were liable to misrepresentation, and that they were evidently intended to make a breach between France and America. Vergennes thanked him for this loyalty.

On his return Hartley formulated his ideas as to terms in one or two letters:—

London, May 15, 1778.

Dear Sir, — I send you the heads of negotiation which have occurred to me as the most probable foundations for peace. What the opinions or plans of other persons may be, I do not know; but the enclosed are the principles which I would recommend, if my recommendation might have any effect.

That America should be declared independent.

That Great Britain and America shall engage mutually not to enter into any treaty offensive to each other.

That an open and free trade shall be established between Great Britain and North America.

That a mutual naturalization shall be established between G. B. and N. A.

That a fœderal alliance shall be negotiated between G. B. and N. A., by persons authorized for that purpose to treat with the Congress in America.

And later on he writes, after remarking that the unsatisfactory answers to the Commissioners have not been surprising on the whole, —

I remember a phrase of yours in a letter some time ago, *that a little time given for cooling, on both sides, would have excellent effects.* I always did, and do still, agree with this sentiment; and if I were to mediate between the two countries, it should be upon a principle conformable to that sentiment. My first proposition should be, —

To withdraw all the fleets and armies.

2dly. To proclaim a cessation of all hostilities, both by sea and land, for 5 years.

3dly. All prisoners on either side to be discharged immediately.

4th. A free and open trade, without any molestation on either side whatever.

5thly. All mutual intercourse and mutual naturalization to be restored as formerly between Great Britain and North America.

6thly. A treaty of peace, alliance, and commerce to be negotiated between the two countries.

In answer to Hartley's views upon this topic, Franklin sent the following:—

PASSY, Sep. 3, 1778.

DEAR SIR, — I received duly your favours of July 14 and August 14. I hoped to have answered them sooner by sending the passport. Multiplicity of business has, I suppose, been the only occasion of delay in the Ministers to consider of and make out the said passport. I hope now soon to have it, as I do not find there is any objection made to it. In a former letter I proposed to you that the exchange would, in my opinion, be preferable at or near Brest, and I expected some time your answer on that point. But perhaps you have not received my letter; you say nothing of it.

I wish with you as much for the restoration of Peace as we both formerly did for the continuance of it. But it must now be a peace of a different kind. I was fond to a folly of our *British connections*, and it was with infinite regret that I saw the necessity you would force us into of breaking it. But the extreme cruelty with which we have been treated has now extinguished every thought of returning to it, and separated us for ever. You have thereby lost limbs that will never grow again.

We, too, have suffered greatly; but our losses will soon be repaired by our good government, our industry, and the fertility of our country. And we now see the mischievous

consequences of such a connection, and the danger of their being repeated if we should be weak enough to enter into it; we see this to plainly ever to listen in the least to any such proposition. We may therefore, with great propriety, take leave of you in those beautiful lines of Dante to the late mistress of his affections.[1]

[1] Exactly the lines which Franklin meant can only be conjectured, for he did not append them to the draft of this letter. They may be those which Longfellow has translated: —

> "Thou from a slave hast brought me into freedom,
> By all those ways, by all the expedients,
> Whereby thou hadst the power of doing it."

CHAPTER XIII.

1778.

THE arrival of Mr. John Adams on the 8th of April, 1778, introduced a new element into American affairs in Paris. It may be said, indeed, that Mr. Adams's appearance anywhere generally added vivacity to the entertainment; and his stay in Paris for the interesting though not very eventful year before he returned to America, is no exception to that remark. Arthur Lee was running backwards and forwards as the year went by, and always made as much mischief as was possible for a man who was conceited, honest, and half crazy. Mr. Adams's narrative and his letters give a most interesting and valuable account of the period of his stay in France. Eager to be of use to his country, he took measures to provide the journals of France and other countries with information favorable to the American interests. He studied French assiduously, and soon became able to join intelligently in conversation with his French friends. He generally speaks of Franklin with respect, but for the showy French admiration of Franklin he had the amused contempt not unnatural for a New Englander; and in some passages he does not conceal his impression that Franklin was carried away by a love of admiration and flattery.[1] His sharp

[1] "That he was a great genius, a great wit, a great humorist, a great satirist, and a great politician, is certain. That he was a great philosopher, a great moralist, and a great statesman, is more questionable." This was written late in Mr. Adams's life, and the word "philosopher" is to be taken in its more modern meaning as a student of intellectual philosophy.

letter to Samuel Adams, written in the summer of this year, has been often printed. Like much of what he wrote, it contains expressions colored more or less by the prejudice of the moment, yet John Adams was well enough satisfied with it to cite it in his own digest of his journal, when he revised that journal in his later years. This letter was a public document, and as such it was printed by Sparks in the "Diplomatic Correspondence." A private letter of December in the same year is more explicit.

John Adams to Samuel Adams.

PARIS, Dec. 7, 1778.

The other [B. Franklin] you know personally, and that he loves his Ease, hates to offend, and seldom gives any opinion till obliged to do it. I know also, and it is necessary that you should be informed, that he is overwhelmed with a correspondence from all quarters, most of them upon trifling subjects and in a more trifling style, with unmeaning visits from Multitudes of People, chiefly from the Vanity of having it to say that they have seen him. There is another thing which I am obliged to mention. There are so many private families, Ladies, and gentlemen that he visits so often, — and they are so fond of him, that he cannot well avoid it, — and so much intercourse with Academicians, that all these things together keep his mind in a constant state of dissipation. If indeed you take out of his hand the Public Treasury and the direction of the Frigates and Continental vessels that are sent here,

When Mr. Adams was crossing the ocean with Marbois, he wrote of Franklin, "He is a great philosopher, but as a legislator of America he has done very little." And again, "I said that Mr. Franklin had great merit as a philosopher, his discoveries in electricity were very grand, and he certainly was a great genius, and had great merit in our American affairs." Here the word "philosopher" is used as we might use "physicist" or "man of science."

and all Commercial affairs, and entrust them to Persons to be appointed by Congress, at Nantes and Bourdeaux, I should think it would be best to have him here alone with such a Secretary as you can confide in. But if he is left here alone even with such a Secretary, and all maritime and Commercial as well as political affairs and money matters are left in his Hands, I am persuaded that France and America will both have Reason to repent it. He is not only so indolent that Business will be neglected, but you know that although he has as determined a soul as any man, yet it is his constant Policy never to say "yes" or "no" decidedly but when he cannot avoid it. . . .

Mr. Adams had been appointed as the successor to Mr. Deane, who was recalled to America by a resolution of Congress, passed November 21, 1777, which he received in March, 1778. Franklin sent to the President of Congress a letter by him, in which he said, "No reasons being given that have yet appeared here, it [the recall] is apprehended to be the effect of some representations from an enemy or two at Paris and at Nantes." Franklin then passed a very honorable testimony to him as a "faithful, active, and able minister." To Deane himself he wrote in a letter well known in the controversy which followed, — a letter which any man might be proud to leave to his children. Vergennes wrote to him a similar letter and sent him the portrait of the King. Deane came home in the Languedoc, the flagship of D'Estaing, with him. On leaving France he wrote to Franklin the following letter:

Silas Deane to Franklin.

Aix, April 8, 1778.

Dear Sir, — I find that I shall have little time to spare, and can therefore only inform you that we arrived

here the 6th without accident,— our Friend, the day after; and that we hope to go forward in two or three days. The greateful sense which I retain of the many civilities shewn me by our friends at Paris and at Passy makes me regret my having been obliged to set out without bidding them adieu in person. Permit me, therefore, to ask you, as you often see them, to make my apology at a proper time for what may otherways appear uncivil in me. I wish it in particular to the Duc de Rochefaucault, to Mad^e^ La Duchesse d'Anville, Mons. Turgot, and Mons. Francia. You must excuse my giving you this trouble, as I cannot be willing to have them think me wanting in that respect which is their due and which I shall ever retain for them.

Accept, my venerable friend, my warmest thanks for the friendship and confidence you have honoured me with from the first of our acquaintance, and for the honorable testimony you have given of me to the Congress. Disagreeable as it is to have enemies, I must consider it, on the whole, as the most fortunate circumstance of my life; since by their means my countrymen and posterity will know that you were my friend, and that the part I acted in the important station I had the honor of being placed in with you had your approbation. I can never while I live cease to wish for the happiness and prosperity of my country, and that your life and health may be continued to you for a long time to come, that you may have the pleasure of seeing and enjoying the fruits of your labours for our common country. Be pleased to present my compliments to your son. I have the honor to remain, with the greatest respect and esteem, Dear Sir,

Your most obed^t^ and very hum^l^ Serv^t^,

S. Deane.

We are able to contribute to the discussion, which cannot be said to be yet closed, as to the wisdom of Mr. Deane's course in France, the following letter from Mr. Adams himself to a correspondent in Nantes, and also a letter from him to James Lovell, in Philadelphia. They are as honorable to Mr. Adams as they are on the whole creditable to Mr. Deane.

John Adams to William McCreary.

PASSI, Sept. 25, 1778.

If I had been strongly against Mr. Deane, I should certainly avow it and make no secret of it at all. I have never been used to disguise my sentiments of Men whom I have been against in public Life, and I certainly should not begin with Mr. Deane, who is not and never was a Man of Importance enough to make me deviate from a Rule that I have observed all my life, vizt., when obliged to be a Man's Enemy, to be openly and generously so.

John Adams to James Lovell.

PASSI, Sept. 26, 1778.

In a letter from Mr. Simeon Deane to his Brother, genuine or forged I know not, it is said that the two A——s are strongly against you. The Members of Congress who were with me any Time knew very well that I have been for him. They also knew very well that some Instances of his Conduct were very mysterious to me, and that, as then informed, I disapproved them; but I believe no body knows any one Member of Congress who did approve them, at least I don't recollect one, altho all treated him and his Character with great tenderness. I mean his extravagant Contracts with foreign officers, made without the least Authority, — made, indeed, at a time when he had no Commission from Congress. The letter-

writer says he knew not to what lengths the two A——s intend to push their "Factions." I don't know what he means by their Factions, but I suppose they would pursue their Integrity and their Duty to their Constituents so far as to vote for Mr. Deans settling his accounts, either with Congress, or somebody appointed by Congress.

Mr. Adams's own views, as they develop from time to time, on the quarrels in the American colony may be gathered from the following letters to Mr. McCreary: —

John Adams to William McCreary.

Passi, May 14, 1778.

The Gentleman you allude to, I hope has been more upon his Guard, because from a long Acquaintance with his Character and Conduct, I know he has Abilities and Merit, and from all that I have seen of him here, I am convinced that he is actuated by great zeal and Anxiety for the public good. A fatal Misunderstanding between some characters of importance has given rise to Reflections upon each other's Conduct that must have hurt the Reputation of our Country. The Gentleman you allude to thinks that our affairs have been Mismanaged, and the public Interest imprudently dissipated, and that many Persons have been improperly admitted to the public Purse. Another Gentleman, who has had the principal Direction of the Purse, complains of Reflections upon the French Nation and Government, Customs, Manners, &c. I wish there was no ground for any of these Reflections. But one Thing I know: that an immense sum of Money is gone, that a great sum of Money is still due. And another thing I know: that I am at a loss to discover what America has received as an equivalent for all these Sums and Debts.

PASSI, July 31, 1778.

I am extremely sorry that any of our Americans should express themselves so unkindly of their Commissioner here. I hope they had not Reason. I am really surprised to find that a failure in a punctual Return of a visit, or in giving an answer to a Letter of no Importance to the Public, should give so much Miff as it does. I can say with Truth, that if the Commissioners should make it a rule to return all Visits and answer all Letters, no Part of the Public Business would be done.

PASSI, Sept. 7, 1778.

But be not deceived, Mr. McCreary. There are interested Combinations in this Country. Americans, Frenchmen, and I fear Englishmen, too, are concerned in them. These People have Spies, Tools, and Emissaries all about, who are taught and employed to fill the Heads of Americans with discontent. Let them go on. So sure as there is a futurity, so sure these Combinations will be brought to light. And the Truth will finally be made to appear, to the full justification of the innocent, faithful, and disinterested servant of his Country, and to the Confusion and Disgrace of the mere Lovers of themselves, who think to obtain opportunities of making private Fortunes by exciting Prejudices against Persons who are sinking and sacrificing theirs in this Camp, and who have been doing so for fifteen years.

Long periods passed during this year in which the Commissioners had no advices from home. But there was no such thrilling news at home as the surrender of Burgoyne. The most important matters which the Commissioners themselves had to attend to were the naval affairs on the English coast, and the preservation of the pecuniary credit of America. To these subjects we shall give separate chapters.

The impression made in England by Burgoyne's surrender drove Lord North to what he called his "conciliatory" propositions of 1778; and there was a considerable period in the winter and spring when it seemed as if there might be good sense enough in England to make peace on the basis of independence.[1] Franklin himself writes to Hartley, "Seriously, on further thoughts, I am of opinion that, if wise and honest men, such as Sir George Saville, the Bishop of St. Asaph, and yourself, were to come over here immediately with powers to treat, you might not only obtain peace with America, but prevent a war with France."

Hartley must have received this letter when he offered the resolutions of which we have spoken.

Benjamin Vaughan thought Lord Shelburne's speech so important that he sent his own sketch of it to Franklin in the following letter: —

Minutes taken memoriter *from L^d. S's Speech, March 5th,* 1778.

March 5, 1778. Not a time to talk about ministers inconsistency, but to explain our views.

The war must end, and troops be withdrawn, but no independence alluded to; for when that happens, England's sun is set. We must go back to as much of the connection as we can, and have "one friend, one enemy, one purse, and one superintendence of commerce." The mutual checks would be of mutual use. Commercial treaty of no avail, either to England or France, — witness Bacon's *intercursus magnus,* which in years was called [blank] entered

[1] The second volume of Hutchinson's Diary contains many indications of such hopes.

into a [blank]; and Mr. Methuen's history of these [blank] Portugal Treaty. [Blank] treaties and of [blank] commercial treaties. To make this go down we in general [blank] with Congress, we must [blank] give Canada, Scotia, the lakes, Newfoundland, Cape Breton, The Floridas, and the Mississippi, to be governed by Congress, by name. In Congress there are many honest and sagacious men. If we are left with these stations, they [the Congress] will have us waiting for their dissensions then to interfere; and we on our part shall have extent enough to swallow up our present force — which must not occupy where it is. The paltry governors[1] and low views of patronage must be given up; they never were useful, never could be well assorted. America will have the capital of our merchants, and a harmless king, who might save a worse power being looked for among themselves; and this, also, joined by a thousand uses, privileges, and ties. And when I made such proposals, I would seek dignified language, and soften all umbrageousness. I know what is to be urged on the other side, but I would say with Bacon, revenge is not infinite, and vindictive war goes not beyond the injury.

As I assent heartily to the matter of two of the bills, and shall let the other pass, I must explain the vote. I don't like the preamble. (He went into a short discussion.)[2] I shall, when I vote thus, shew that I foresaw the effects.

When France comes abreast with us to congress, let us suppose that they state our merits in columns, side by

[1] Had formerly planned to leave them to the election of the people themselves in projected new settlements, as persons could be brought to the bar to prove. But Mr. Grenville overruled. He found great difficulties to get fit country gentlemen, sea officers, or land officers to accept of governments.

[2] Talked about a rejection of an article in the Treaty of Utrecht by Parliament which L[d]. Bolingbroke had presumed to treat for, though relating to an act of Parliament.

side; for it is lawful to learn *method*, even from a rebel (Dr. Franklin). In one column will come the offers of France, as we may conceive, fair and large. In the *other* will come the bill, as we see it offered by the minister, — by the minister who starved, who tomahawked them, and who bribed their servants to cut their throats; who spread Catholic despotism along one frontier, and plunder and prohibition on the other; who violated governments, refused petitions, and broke faith, &c., &c. And what hold has America on our country? Is it in Parliament, which echoes and changes as its leaders give the word and change? Is it in ministers, who are seen [doubtful] even when bringing inquiry upon the enormity of the cost? Is it in the faith of ministers? There are countries where the word of ministers would be taken; in France and Austria a Choiseul and a Kaunitz have refused to break theirs for a king, and [the time] has come when the king has thanked them.

But now to look at home. We have been told we are on the eve of war, and yet not one step taken to prepare. We have just reprobated our navy. And what is the number of our allies? We have memorialized away the attachment of Holland; we have detached Portugal; and no one knows our standing in Germany. It is no longer the country of independent Barons; it is getting into 7 or 8 successions, and Germany and Prussia swallowing up the few that remain.

When I read of the petition just voted by the city, I thought they might have summed up their intentions in the sayings of the Spanish Statesman in Bacon, to Philip: "For your majesty's comfort, you have upon earth but two enemies: one the whole world, the other your own ministers." Yet when I hear of the many millions assembled against us and the few for us, I know what is to be done

by vigour. When Scotland was still separated, I remember the effect Clarendon states as produced by one man's vigour, Cromwell, upon Europe. Ministers may injure and kings be delayed beyond redemption; but yet I say this, that we may not sink our spirit along with our hope.

When the mention of independence comes from ministry, it is, in vulgar language, the thief that first robs and then fires the house in order to cover his escape. If America is independent, we must demand of ministers the blessings they have lost; for they received everything *peaceable and safe.* I well remember the attorney and solicitor generals testified under their hands the calm that had intervened. It is one cause of my objections to independence, that it will be impracticable to avoid having rendered to us shocking personal accounts.

(N. B. Much extraneous matter occurred which is omitted. The Lords Mansfield, Harford, Denbigh, and Lord Bute's son. I verily believe the believe [sic] was meant to unite some at home and divide America. It failed in the first, partly from its humility, impracticability, or [blank]; and when this was seen, it fell down upon the minister, and has become a derelict in both houses. People did not know their part; and had it been balloted, might have been lost. Yet we are really tired of the war —and of the ministry.)

The English government, indeed, was at last fully impressed with the idea of the necessity of a reconciliation with her Colonies. But as often happens in English diplomacy, the administration had taken this view too late, and could not even yet see how far they must go to secure their wishes. Various messengers were despatched to Franklin in Paris. One of these was David Hutton, a charitable Moravian gentleman, whom Franklin had

known well in England, and who was supposed to have personal access to the King and Queen. Hartley, as we have seen, came over. There were also other agents more or less distinctly avowed. William Pulteney, a member of Parliament, was one; and a Mr. Chapman, a member of the Irish Parliament, was another. Of all such overtures the most extraordinary was one made in an anonymous letter which was "thrown into one of our grates"[1] the first week in July. This letter affected to be from Charles de Weissenstein, and was dated at Brussels the 16th of June. It is too long to print at full length, but the whole is curious and remarkable. It considers independence as impossible. "Our title to the empire is indisputable. It will be asserted either by ourselves or successors whenever occasion presents." Franklin was sure that this letter came from the King. He said "that there were in the letter infallible marks by which he knew that it came from the King, and that it could not have come from any other without the King's knowledge. Many other hints have been dropped by Franklin to me of some mysterious correspondence between the King and him personally."[2]

This extraordinary letter proposed that the answer should be given, at an hour named, to a gentleman who should be waiting for it in Notre Dame, who should drop a piece of crumpled paper on the floor as an evidence of whom he was. The letter closed with the following passage, in which a very ingenious reader may possibly find a sign of the King's hand: —

"And now, Sir, I will take my leave of you, confiding in your personal honor and that of the country which

[1] This phrase is Mr. Adams's. It probably means that the letter was thrown into one of the grated gateways of the house at Passy.

[2] The Life and Works of John Adams, vol. iii., 178.

you represent, that, if you do not choose to accept my offers, and are not in earnest to bring about this reconciliation, or if you have entered into negotiations with England by other means, you will instantly destroy these papers, and make no use of them disadvantageous to him whom I have employed on this errand nor to me. In case you send any terms, do not be impatient to know what has been done with them. There are many circumstances of time and opportunity which must be managed, and which cannot be previously foreseen. Sufficeth it that you can but stand in the same place as you do now, whatever part ministry or parliaments take.

Your humble servant, and a well-wisher to all men of science and liberal mind, and a friend of liberty,

CHARLES DE WEISSENSTEIN."

Of the plan itself with which the letter closed, the following extraordinary proposal made the sixth article:

"As the conspicuous public part which some American gentlemen have taken may expose them to the personal enmity of some of the chief persons in Great Britain, and as it is unreasonable that their services to their country should deprive them of those advantages which their talents would otherwise have gained them, the following persons shall have offices, or pensions for life, at their option, according to the sums opposite their respective names: —

Messrs. Adams,
Hancock,
Washington,
Franklin,
&c., &c., &c.

In case his Majesty or his successors shall ever create American Peers, then these persons, or their descendants,

shall be amongst the first so created, if they choose it, Mr. Washington to have immediately a brevet of Lieutenant General, and all the honors and precedence incident thereto, but not to assume or bear any command without a special warrant or letter of service for that purpose from the King."

As this letter was addressed to Franklin personally, it was agreed that he should answer it personally, and he did so. Mr. Adams says, "He sent them an answer in which they have a dose which will make them sick." And Mr. Sparks says, "The whole letter is one of the best specimens of the writer's peculiar clearness and vigor of thought and felicity of style." It is written with the expectation that it would be read by the King. The following passages will give an idea of the directness of the answer. "The very proposing of a correspondence so to be managed, in a manner not necessary where fair dealing is intended, gives just reason to suppose you intend the contrary. Besides, as your court has sent Commissioners to treat with Congress, with all the powers that could be given them by the crown under the act of Parliament, what good purpose can be served by privately obtaining propositions from us? Before those Commissioners went we might have treated, in virtue of our general powers (with the knowledge, advice, and approbation of our friends,) upon any propositions made to us. But, under the present circumstances, for us to make propositions, while a treaty is supposed to be actually on foot with the Congress, would be extremely improper, highly presumptuous with regard to our constituents, and answer no good end whatever."

The letter closes with the following vigorous statement, which must have been read with satisfaction by George III.: —

"This proposition of delivering ourselves, bound and gagged, ready for hanging, without even a right to complain, and without a friend to be found afterwards among all mankind, you would have us embrace upon the faith of an act of Parliament! Good God! an act of your Parliament! This demonstrates that you do not yet know us, and that you fancy we do not know you. But it is not merely this flimsy faith that we are to act upon; you offer us *hope*, — the hope of PLACES, PENSIONS, and PEERAGES. These, judging from yourselves, you think are motives irresistible. This offer to corrupt us, Sir, is with me your credential, and convinces me that you are not a private volunteer in your application. It bears the stamp of British court character. It is even the signature of your King. But think for a moment in what light it must be viewed in America. By PLACES, you mean places among us, for you can take care by a special article to secure your own to yourselves. We must then pay the salaries in order to enrich ourselves with these places. But you will give us PENSIONS, probably to be paid, too, out of your expected American revenue, and which none of us can accept without deserving, and perhaps obtaining, a SUS-*pension*. PEERAGES! Alas! Sir, our long observation of the vast servile majority of your peers, voting constantly for every measure proposed by a minister, however weak or wicked, leaves us small respect for that title. We consider it as a sort of *tar-and-feather* honor, or a mixture of foulness and folly, which every man among us who should accept it from your King would be obliged to renounce, or exchange for that conferred by the mobs of their own country, or wear it with everlasting infamy."

Mr. Adams thinks that this letter was never sent. Mr. Sparks found both letter and answer in the French

archives, and printed Franklin's answer.[1] A translation of the Weissenstein letter is in the Sparks manuscripts. On the day and hour appointed at Notre Dame, an Irishman, named "Col. Fitz something," appeared at the place appointed and remained for two hours, tracked all the time by the police, who had been directed by Vergennes to keep an eye upon him.

At the very same time Franklin communicated to Vergennes the following paper, bearing on a financial question as to the difference between English and French exchange: —

Franklin to Vergennes.

It seems to have been insinuated, either thro' mistake or ill-will to the United States, —

1. That their merchants have combined to depreciate the bills drawn on France.

2. That their trade with England is as great as before the war.

I have known two instances when bills of exchange on England have fallen more than 15 per cent lower than the present price of bills on France.

The first was in 1739, when, an expedition being projected against Carthagene, the government of England ordered 3,000 men to be raised in America and transports with provisions, &c., to be furnished, for the amount of which expense bills were ordered to be drawn on the Treasury at London. This adventitious quantity of bills coming into market, and being more than the common course of the commerce required, occasioned the lower-

[1] He thought the letter important enough to copy it in his own hand, and it is from his manuscript that we copy the passages above. The whole letter would fill fifteen or twenty of our pages.

ing of their price 42½ per cent below the rate before accustomed.

The like happened a few years after, when, on a prospect of short crops of corn in Europe, orders were received in America to purchase and send over vast quantities, and to draw bills and sell them in the country in order to raise money for the purchase. This sudden addition to the quantity of bills produced a fall of 46 per cent in their price. And this must always happen in some proportion when the quantity of any article *in commercio* exceeds the present demand.

And when it is considered that the merchants of America are numerous, and dispersed thro' 13 different provinces at great distances from each other, such a combination will appear as improbable as that the farmers in France should combine to raise the price of wheat.

With regard to the English Commerce, there is none certainly but what is contraband, and there can be no temptation to such contraband but for particular commodities that are cheaper here than in France. The quantity, therefore, cannot be great. Such contraband is found difficult to prevent in all countries. It is carried on at this time between France and England. But there are many commodities much cheaper in France, such as wines, silks, oil, modes, &c., which will be of great consumption in America; and when correspondencies are once settled, and the people there become acquainted with the manufactures of France, the demand for them will increase, those manufactures will of course be improved in goodness and cheapness, and the trade continue to augment accordingly.

It is difficult to change suddenly the whole current of connections, correspondencies, and confidences that subsist between merchants and carry them all into a new channel;

but time and a continuance of friendship will make great alterations.[1]

Mr. Sparks published in the fifth volume of Franklin's works the curious passport sent to all the American cruisers, ordering them to exempt from injury the packets which the Moravian brethren from year to year despatched to their station in Labrador. The draft of this passport for the year 1778 goes into some additional details, which make it worth preserving.

28 June, 1778.

To all Commanders of Armed Vessels belonging to the United States of America:

GENTLEMEN, — Whereas the religious society commonly called the Moravian brethren, has established a mission on the northern part of the Labradore coast, for the good purpose of civilizing and converting to Christianity the barbarians who live there, and by that means put an end to their custom of plundering, murdering the people of our fishing vessels and others passing in those seas; and whereas, those missionaries and their families depend for subsistence in that unfertile country on the supplies annually sent them and on the friendship of the natives, which is maintained by little presents of iron ware, all furnished by charitable subscriptions in England, — the interruption of which supplies might hazard the loss of those pious missionaries, and ruin an enterprise beneficial to humanity, — I do therefore hereby [inform you] that the sloop "Good Intent," burthen about 75 tons, Capt. Francis Mugford, carrying in the present voyage about 5000 bricks for building chimneys, with provisions and necessaries for the

[1] Our copy of this letter bears this endorsement: "Passy, 6 July, 1778. The above paper was delivered to M. de Rayneval, to be by him communicated to Ct. Vergennes, in order to correct some wrong ideas of that minister."

missionaries and their assistants, and some ironmongery and tin ware for the Indians, — the crew consisting of the Captain, Mate, three men, and a boy; and the passengers, one man and three women, — is the vessel employed in the above service for the present year. And I request if the said vessel should be met with by any of you, that you would not consider her as a merchantman, proper to be made a prize of, but rather concur benevolently in promoting so good a design, by permitting her to pass freely, and affording her any such assistance which the casualties of the sea may have rendered necessary; in which I am persuaded your conduct will be approved not only in your breasts, but by the Congress, by your owners, and by all mankind. Wishing you all success and prosperity, I have the honour to be, gentlemen,

Your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN,

One of the Plenipotentiary Ministers of the United States at the Court of France.

PARIS, June 22, 1778.

We are able to print for the first time a curious journal of Franklin's, containing his own studies regarding his own health, written out in the autumn of this year. They have a certain value as indicating the beginning of the decline of health, which is often alluded to, after the year 1780. It will be observed that a postscript to this paper was written in January of that year.

PASSY, Oct. 4, 1778.

As my constitution appears to have undergone some considerable changes within the last 3 or 4 years, it may be of use to make some notes of the changes past, and to continue them, in order to ascertain what are hurtful or beneficial.

I had enjoyed continued health for near 20 years, except once in two or three years a slight fit of the gout, which generally terminated in a week or ten days, and once an intermitting fever got from making experiments over Stagnate waters.

I was sometimes vexed with an itching on the back, which I observed particularly after eating freely of beef. And sometimes after long confinement at writing with little exercise, I have felt sudden pungent pains in the flesh of different parts of the body, which I was told were scorbutic. A journey used to free me of them.

In 1773, being in Ireland, I was, after a plentiful dinner of fish the first day of my arrival, seized with a violent vomiting and looseness. The latter continued, tho' more moderate, as long as I staid in that kingdom, which was 4 or 5 weeks.

On my return I first observed a kind of scab or scurff on my head, about the bigness of a shilling. Finding it did not heal but rather increased, I mentioned it to my friend, Sir John Pringle, who advised a mercurial water to wash it, and some physic. It slowly left that place, but appeared in other parts of my head. He also advised my abstaining from salted meats and cheese, which advice I did not much follow, often forgetting it.

In 1775 I went to America. On the passage I necessarily eat more salt meat than usual with me at London. I immediately entered the Congress, where, and with the Committee of Safety, I sat great part of that year and the next 10 or 12 hours a day without exercise. We lost 3 members in those years by apoplexies, viz., Mr. Randolf, Mr. Bory, and Mr. Lynch. I had frequent giddinesses. I went to Canada. On the passage I suffered much from a number of large boiles. In Canada my legs swelled, and I apprehended dropsy. Boils continued and harrassed me

after my return, but the swelling of my legs passed of. The boils, however, left round them a kind of dry scab or scurviness, which being rubbed off, appeared in the form of white bran. My giddiness left me.

In my passage to France, Nov. 1776, I lived chiefly on salt beef, the fowls beeing too hard for my teeth. But being poorly nourished, I was very weak on my arrival; boils continued to vex me, and the scurff extending all the small of my back, on my sides, my legs, and my arms, besides what continued under my hair. I applied to a physician, who ordered me Belloste's pills [1] and an infusion of a root called [blank]. I took the infusion awhile, but it being disagreeable, and finding no effect, I omitted it. I continued longer to take the pills; but finding my teeth loosened and that I had lost 3, I desisted the use of them. I found that bathing stopped the progress of the disorder. I therefore took the hot bath twice a week, two hours at a time till this last summer. It always made me feel comfortable, as I rubbed off the softened scurff in the warm water; and I otherwise enjoyed good health.

I stated my case to Dr. Ingenhousz, and desired him to show it to Sir John Pringle and obtain his advice. They sent me from London some medicines; but Dr. Ingenhousz proposing to come over soon, and the affair not pressing, I resolved to omit taking the medicines till his arrival.

In July the disorder began to diminish, at first slowly, but afterwards rapidly; and by the beginning of October it had quitted entirely my legs, feet, thighs, and arms, and my belly, a very little was left on my sides, more on the small of my back, but the whole daily diminishing.

[1] Augustin Belloste was a physician of some distinction fifty years before, — "physician to the Duchess of Savoy," and author of "Le Chirurgien de l'Hôpital." Paris, 1695.

I observed that where there was no redness under the scurff, if I took it once off it did not return. I had hardly bathed in those 3 months, I took no remedy whatever, and I know not what to ascribe the change to, unless it was the heat of the summer which sometimes made me sweat, particularly when I exercised. I had five boils just before the amendment commenced, which discharged a great deal of matter. And once my legs began to swell, but that went off in a few days, and I have been otherwise extremely well and hearty.

The second instant, October, I ate a hearty supper, much cheese, and drank a good deal of champagne. The 3d I ate no breakfast, but a hearty dinner, and at night found my back itch extremely near the shoulders, which continues to-day the 4th. I ate some salted beef at dinner yesterday, but not much. I wish the cool weather may not bring on a return of the disorder.

Oct. 4. The itching continues, but somewhat abated.

Oct. 6. Drink but one glass of wine to-day; the itching almost gone. I begin to think it will be better for me to abstain from wine. My Dinner to-day was mutton, boiled, and fowl, with a good deal of fruit.

Oct. 12. I have lately drank but little wine. The itching has not returned; the scurff continues to diminish. But yesterday I observed my ancles swelled. I suppose my having used no exercise lately may be the cause.

Jan. 14, 1779. The swelling above mentioned continued some few weeks, being greatest at night, my complexion at the same time not fresh. At length the itching returned, and a new set of eruptions of scurfy spots appeared in many parts of my body. My back had never been entirely cleared, and the scurf began to increase there and extend itself. But it is not yet so bad as it has been, and it seems to spare the parts that were

before affected, except in my back. The swelling has left my legs, which are now as dry and firm as ever, and I feel myself otherwise in perfect health, and have as much vigour and activity as can be expected at my age; so that I begin to be more reconciled to this troublesome disorder, as considering it an effort of Nature to get rid of peccant matter, that might if not discharged, break up my constitution.

Feb. 28, 79. The disorder on my skin has continued augmenting. On Monday, the 15th, I dined and drank rather too freely at M. Darcy's. Tuesday morning I felt a little pain in my right great toe. I bathed that day in the hot bath, which I had long omitted. A regular fit of the gout came on, which swelled my foot exceedingly, and I have had a little in my left foot. It is now going off, and I hope to get abroad in a day or two. No remarkable change in other respects. In this fit I had very little appetite, which I do not remember to have been the case in former fits.

Jan. 16, 1780. I have enjoyed good health ever since the last date. Towards the end of the summer most of the disorder in my skin disappeared, a little only remaining on my left arm, a little under each breast, and some on the small of the back. I had taken at different times a good deal of Dr. Pringle's prescription; but whether that occasioned the amendment, or whether it was the heat of the summer as I supposed in October, 1778, I am uncertain. The disorder seems to be now increasing again, and appears upon my hands. I am otherwise well; my leg sound. To-morrow I enter on my 75th year.

Franklin himself says, in a letter describing his private life of this year, to his friend Mrs. Hewson, in England, that he "dines abroad six days in seven. Sundays I

serve to dine at home with such Americans as pass this way; and I then have my grandson Ben, with some other American children, from the school."

With the aid of Mr. Adams's diary, of Mr. Lee's, and of Mr. Austin's, it would be almost in our power to give a list of these dinner-parties for whole weeks. Mr. Austin gives the following account of the dinner on the Fourth of July: —

"July 4 [1778]. By invitation went to dine with the Commissioners, where found all the Americans who live at or near Paris, with a number of French gentlemen, in all about fifty. Amidst the frequent congratulations of this happy anniversary, and the pleasing aspect of our affairs, we were summoned to dinner. An elegant entertainment was prepared, — the table decorated with a variety of flowers in a pleasing manner. The American flag, the Cap of Liberty, and many of the useful arts were represented at this cheerful banquet. Each guest drew from a basket a handsome posy of flowers, having an inscription upon it. Joy and festivity crowned the day. A number, say thirteen, toasts were drunk after dinner."[1]

Mr. Adams, in alluding to the same party, says: "We had the honor of the company of all the American gentlemen and ladies in and about Paris, to dine with Dr. Franklin and me at Passy, together with a few of the French gentlemen in the neighborhood, — M. Chaumont, M. Brillon, M. Veillard, M. Grand, M. Baudouin, Mr. Gérard, the Abbés Chalut and Arnoux, &c."

On the 31st of October Vergennes invites all three of the Commissioners to dine with him, by way of celebrating

[1] Mr. Austin says, at the end of his journal of a year, that in that time, on the continent of Europe he had not once seen what he calls a "table." Boards were brought and placed on trestles or fixed stands, — to be removed when the feast was finished.

the ratification of the treaty. As this year went forward, Vergennes had new means of information from America quite independent of the Commissioners and their despatches. The Baron de Kalb had been already in regular correspondence with him. So soon as the independence of the nation was recognized by France, the King commissioned Conrad Alexander Gérard[1] as his minister to Philadelphia. Gérard sailed, with D'Estaing and Dane. From the time of his arrival he wrote very full despatches, and it would seem that he had better luck in transmission, with the facilities of the French navy behind him, than the Foreign Committee had had with their despatches. Vergennes received a letter from him almost every week,[2] and the collection makes a very curious and valuable series of authorities for a history of that period. Although the sessions of Congress were secret, he does not hesitate to give an account of what passed, and of the state of parties, and of the method of doing business. He describes the British and Spanish intrigues, and gives the detail of the Americans' reasons for refusing to ratify the Convention at Saratoga. Plans were discussed with him for an invasion of Barbadoes, for an attack on Halifax, and another Canadian expedition, which he details.

Of Vergennes's replies, which are also preserved in the French archives, the most important point to be observed is his statement that, while France would not interfere to prevent another invasion of Canada, such a movement would not be agreeable either to France or Spain.

[1] He is not to be confounded with Joseph Matthew Gérard de Rayneval, whom we shall meet in the Foreign Office at the final negotiations for peace.

[2] There are thirty-five letters between July 15 and the end of the year.

CHAPTER XIV.

JOHN PAUL JONES.

THE reader has already seen that the work-rooms of the Commissioners at Passy were anything but a quiet cabinet of diplomacy. There were few matters of business which did not, sooner or later, find their way there; and, as has been said, the naval affairs of the young republic, whether at the hands of privateers or of the officers commissioned in the navy of the United States, were prominent.

Among those officers John Paul Jones had earned himself a favorable reputation by the pluck and energy which he had shown on the American coast from the first moment of the establishment of a naval force by Congress. He had, however, been disappointed by some arrangements of rank made in Philadelphia in the spring of 1777, and had gone there in person to try to rectify them. His personal address was always agreeable, and though he did not gain the place in the order of captains which he wanted, he did obtain what he also wanted, — a commission to sail to France and cruise on the European coast. After some disappointments and many delays, he sailed on the 15th of November in the "Ranger," a vessel of eighteen guns, which for four months he had been fitting for sea.[1] He hoped to carry out the joyful news of Burgoyne's surren-

[1] He took command of her in July, when he displayed the stars and stripes for the first time on shipboard.

der, but, as the reader knows, he was anticipated. On his passage out he sighted and escaped from the "Invincible," an English seventy-four. He took two fruit-vessels from Malaga, and sent them into French ports. His passage was only twenty days, and on the 5th of December he announced his arrival to the Commissioners. He proposed at once "to surprise the defenceless places" of the enemy, and his knowledge of the English and Scotch coast enabled him to suggest details for such proposals. From this time for more than two years, Jones and his plans and his performances fill a considerable place in Franklin's correspondence, as they filled a large part of his time. He soon learned that Franklin was a sure friend; and although at one time he feared that this friend was alienated from him, this was his mistake, as he himself acknowledged. There are more than twenty letters from Franklin to him in 1778 and 1779, only a few of which have been printed in the Diplomatic Correspondence.

He had hoped that the "Indian," a fine ship building on American account at Amsterdam, would be assigned to him. But it had been arranged that she should be transferred to the King's navy. Other proposals were made to him which satisfied him for the time; and as early as January 16, 1778, the Commissioners notified him that he would probably have to make another cruise in the "Ranger." He could not help, however, advising Sartine, the minister of the navy, and the Count d'Estaing as to what this Admiral should do on his arrival. And it is but fair to say that had D'Estaing arrived in the Delaware a few days earlier than he did, — as Jones hoped he would, — the war might have been finished there and then.

He was proud afterwards of saying that the "Ranger" received, in February, 1778, the first salute ever given by a foreign power to the American flag. This was on the

14th of February, and he regarded it as an acknowledgment of American independence.

On the 10th of April he sailed in this cruise, and on the 21st saw, for the first time, the English ship-of-war "Drake," of twenty guns. But a well-planned attack on her was prevented by a sudden gale. The next day he landed at Whitehaven, where he hoped and meant to burn the shipping, and where he did some damage and greatly alarmed the neighborhood. Standing over to the Scotch shore, he landed again, in the hope of taking the Earl of Selkirk prisoner. The Earl was absent; but Jones's men took the family plate from the castle without offering other violence. The next day Jones met the "Drake" again. He engaged her and took her. With his prize he returned to Brest, where he arrived after a cruise of only twenty-eight days. He at once took measures to purchase from his crew the plate of the Countess of Selkirk, whom he had known when a boy; and after some years the Earl of Selkirk received the plate and acknowledged it.

The credit which he had gained by the capture of the "Drake" was reason enough to encourage the Commissioners to intercede with the French Court to obtain for him the command of the "Indian." Franklin wrote him on the first of June to say, "I have the pleasure of informing you that it is proposed to give you the command of the great ship we have built at Amsterdam. By what you wrote unto us formerly I have ventured to say in your behalf that this proposal would be agreeable to you. You will immediately let me know your resolution. . . . She is at present the property of the King. You will have the commission and flag of the United States, and act under their orders and laws." This plan was held to for some time. It was proposed to join with the "Indian" the "Prince de Nassau" and the "Providence." By this plan

Jones was diverted through the summer, but, to his great annoyance, it was never carried out. Sartine found more difficulty than he had perhaps expected, in placing an American commander, however distinguished, over the heads of French officers. The ratification of the treaty made war sure, and the French fleet would probably need all its seamen. But various propositions were made to Jones, which led him to remain in France and to let Lieutenant Simpson take the "Ranger" home. He had been displeased with Simpson's conduct. In the gossip of Nantes it was reported that he was turned out of the American service; and at this he was so indignant that he sought to have Simpson court-martialled. But proper explanations soothed these wounds to his pride. And the Commissioners, to relieve him, sent him the following letter: —

Passy, Feby. 10, 1779.

Sir, — As your separation from the "Ranger" and the appointment of Lt. Simpson to the command of her will be liable to misinterpretations and misrepresentations by persons who are unacquainted with the real cause of those facts,

We hereby certify that your leaving the "Ranger" was by our consent, at the express request of his excellency M. de Sartine, who informed us that he had occasion to employ you in some public service; that Lt. Simpson was appointed to the command of the "Ranger" with your consent, after having consented to release him from an arrest under which you had put him.

That your leaving the "Ranger," in our opinion, ought not and cannot be any injury to your rank or character in the service of the Ud. S., and that your commission in their navy continues in full force.

[Signed by all the Commissioners.]

But Jones sighed, as well he might, in his forced inactivity. In October he wrote to the King himself. "Thus have I been chained down to shameful inactivity for nearly five months," he said. "I have lost the best season of the year, and such opportunities of serving my country and acquiring honor as I cannot again expect this war; and to my infinite mortification I am considered everywhere an officer cast off and in disgrace for secret reasons."

It does not appear that the King ever received the appeal from which these words are taken. But this letter and other entreaties and complaints of his were of so much avail that M. Chaumont persuaded Sartine to give orders for the purchase of a ship for Jones. The result was that on the 4th of February, 1779, the "Duc de Duras," a ship fourteen years old, was bought and given to him. He considered that he gained this success by going to Paris himself. At his request, therefore, she was called "Le Bon Homme Richard," in memory of Poor Richard's saying, "If you would have your business done, come yourself. If not, send." He still had to have cannon cast for the ship's battery, and succeeded in enlisting sailors readily, the American seamen at Nantes "being generally pleased," he says, "with the character of the Poor Richard." He now made his plans to do exactly what he had proposed to do the year before, — to make some descent upon the English coast, and to destroy the Baltic fleet, which would be protected by a single frigate only. It was also proposed at Court that Lafayette should join him, and command a body of select French troops. The "Alliance," a new frigate built in America, had lately arrived, and she was to join the squadron, with the "Pallas," the "Vengeance," and the cutter "Cerf." All these last-named vessels "belonged to the King." On the 30th of April, 1779, the "Richard" was ready

for sea, if only her battery could be provided. But the plan for a military force was abandoned. The French government was projecting a general invasion, and on the 22d of May Lafayette wrote to Jones to apprise him of this change. Jones's little expedition was a mere trifle to such important movements. Jones announces to Franklin his own disappointment at the failure of this plan in the following letter.

L'Orient, May 26, 1779.

My Dear Sir, — Since I had the honor to receive your kind and polite letter of the 19th I have waited with impatient expectation of seeing the Marquis here. The "Bonhomme Richard," the "Alliance," the "Pallas," the "Scerf," and the "Vengeance" are now ready in the Road for embarkation of the troops. I have sent officers and men to Brest for the "Leveller," and I expect the appearance of that vessel every hour. This little armament was not, I may say, begun before the 12th of this month. Since then the people concerned in it have been employed night and day, and I have flattered myself with hopes of success and honor.

Judge then of my disappointment when, instead of seeing the Marquis, I have rec^{d} a letter from him, which tells me that the "King's disposition concerning our plan is entirely changed, and that instead of meeting me, he is now going to take command of the King's Reg^{t} at Saints."

Extraordinary as this change is, it is not my place to inquire into the reasons of it, — and the expense of the armament may perhaps exceed the usual amount, — yet I am certain that the alteration cannot be imputed to any want of activity on my part. Indeed, it is my opinion that no season would be so fit for our purpose as the present; for supposing the fleet should sail from Brest about the 1st of June, the enemies' attention would be fully

engaged, and I think they would find employment enough without attending to the little armament at L'Orient.

I am ready to follow any plan you please to adopt, or if any thing is left to me, you may depend on my best endeavours, either in Europe or America, — in both I think I can see openings. It would have added greatly to my happiness to have been joined in command with a character so amiable as the Marquis, and I am unwilling to drop the expectation of his coming here. His letter was but this moment brought to my hands, and to save the post I am obliged to shorten my letter.

I have the honor to be, with honest affection and esteem in all changes, honored and dear sir, your very obliged friend and obliged servant,

JNO. P. JONES.

It was while the plan of a joint expedition was still entertained, that Franklin wrote his wise letter on the management of such expeditions, with a series of instructions as to defenceless towns and prisoners.

"Although the English have wantonly burned many defenceless towns in America, you are not to follow this example, unless when a reasonable ransom is refused; in which case your own generous feelings as well as this instruction will induce you to give timely notice of your intention, that sick and ancient persons, women and children, may be first removed."

In reply to Franklin, Jones said: "The letter I had the honour to receive from you to-day, would make a coward brave."

A letter written by Franklin to the Marine Board of Congress about this time, will illustrate the embarrassments which were thus brought upon Franklin and the Commissioners: —

PASSY, 2d June, 1779.

To the Marine Committee of Congress:

GENTLEMEN, — I received the honor of yours by the Marquis de la Fayette, who arrived safe and well in the "Alliance" freguatte, which you were pleased to put under my orders.

There had been a conspiracy on board to seize and run away with the ship to England. Thirty-eight of the crew concerned in the plot were brought in under confinement, and the captain was much embarrassed with them and suspicious of many more. We could not try them here for want of officers sufficient to make a court-martial. The French Admiralty could not take cognizance of their offence. The captain objected to carrying them back, as both troublesome and dangerous. In fine, we got leave to land and confine them in a French prison, where they continue till farther orders.

Captain Landais desired much to have his ship sheathed here with copper; but having neither orders nor money in my hands for that purpose, I was obliged to refuse it. There was a great misunderstanding between him and his officers, and a great discontent among the officers themselves, who were in want of clothing and money. The ship, too, tho' new, wanted great repairs, all her iron-work being bad. The agent, M. Schweighauser, required my orders about everything, and I had letters from him, from the officers, or from the captain, by almost every post. My total unacquaintedness with such business made it very perplexing to me. I have got thro' it at last, and I hear the officers are more contented; but I hope to have no more such affairs on my hands. Being informed by the officer who came up from the captain with the despatches that she had not hands sufficient to man prizes if she should be sent on a cruise; that the captain did not care

to supply the deficiency with Frenchmen; that if she were again at Boston, now that her character for a swift sailor and that of the captain for a good officer were established, of which the seamen were before doubtful, there was the greatest probability that she would be fully manned immediately; and as Mr. Adams wished for an opportunity of going home, and I heard that some ships were bound to North America from Nantes to whom the convoy of a frigate quite to the American coast might be convenient,— I determined to send her back directly, and accordingly offered her as convoy to the trade. But as Mr. de la Motte Picquet was about to sail from Brest with a squadron before our frigate could be fitted, and as he offered to take care of all outward bound ships who should join him at Brest, the offer I made was not accepted. All the American ships went from Nantes to join his fleet. She was, however, still to go with M. Adams; but receiving the enclosed letter from Mr. de Sartine, Minister of the Marine, who at the same time offered to man her completely if I complied with his request, I thought it right to oblige him, as the inconvenience would be only a little longer delay to Mr. Adams in getting home, and by her extremely swift sailing, of which they relate wonders, she might, in the proposed cruise, take prisoners enough to relieve, by the now established cartel, the rest of our unfortunate countrymen still in the English prisons. I accordingly acquainted M. de Sartine that I would, agreeable to his desire, order her to L'Orient, where she now is a part of Capt. Jones's little squadron, which is ready to sail, if not already sailed, on the intended expedition.

After all this was thus arranged, Mr. Arthur Lee wrote to me to urge the sending her with the merchant ships, and to carry over some despatches of his and Mr. Izard's that were of great importance; but as those ships were by

this time sailed, and the French frigate with the new minister and Mr. Adams was to sail in a week or two and might carry those despatches, the contents of which I was not acquainted with, I did not see the necessity of retracting the promise I had made to the minister, and thereby deranging the expedition.

As our ships-of-war that arrive here require an amazing expense to outfit them, and the prizes they bring in often occasion law suits and all the embarrassment and sollicitation and vexation attending suits in this country, I must beg the Committee would be so good as to order the several Navy Boards to send no more to be out fitted here without sending effects to defray the expense; and that if our armed ships should be still ordered to cruise in these seas, a consul or consuls may be appointed in the several seaports, who will thereby be more at hand to transact maritime business expeditiously, will understand it better, relieve your Minister at this Court from a great deal of trouble, and leave him at liberty to attend affairs of more general importance.

With great esteem and respect, I have the honour Gentlemen, &c., &c.[1]

The squadron at last sailed from Groix on the 14th of August. Jones had been chafing and raging for more than fifteen months, and was at last at sea, in nominal command. The "Alliance," the American frigate attached to his squadron, was a fine vessel, but was, alas, under the command of Landais, who was nearly if not quite crazy, and who illustrated every day to Jones the hopelessness of any attempt to command a crew of one nation by an officer selected from the service of another. Besides the

[1] In more than one instance, mutinous crews carried ships into England, by such conspiracy as threatened the "Alliance."

five vessels already named, the "Monsieur," a privateer of forty guns, and the "Grandville," of fourteen, joined the squadron. Landais soon showed symptoms of insubordination, and at one critical time, when Jones wished to land on the Scotch coast, he had disappeared. It was on this occasion that Jones threatened Leith, an event which Walter Scott speaks of among his earliest recollections. But a sudden change of wind, and the absence of Landais, compelled the squadron to withdraw.

They took many coasting vessels and colliers and some more valuable prizes. But the expedition had failed of Jones's main purpose, a descent on the English or Scotch coast, and was on its return to the Texel, as ordered in the original plan, when, on the 23d of September, Jones fell in, off Scarborough on the eastern coast of England, with the Baltic fleet of merchantmen, under convoy of the "Serapis" and "Countess of Scarborough." There were in all forty-three sail. Jones had been joined the day before by the "Pallas" and the "Alliance." The "Cerf" and the "Vengeance" had left him long before.

Of the memorable action which followed we have Jones's official account, written at the Texel, October 3, his account in his letter to King Louis, the official account by Pearson, the English commander, and a careful account by Dale, afterwards a captain in the navy, who was then a lieutenant under Jones. These accounts differ from each other as little as could be expected, considering the difference in the points of view. The action began at seven in the evening. Pearson was near enough to hail the "Richard," and said, "If you do not answer, I will fire." No answer was heard. He did fire the broadside of his lower deck, and at the same time the "Richard" fired hers. She had six heavy guns, two of which burst at this discharge. The men on that deck

refused to work the remaining guns. Jones brought his ship close to his adversary, and even tried to fasten the vessels together. But they fell apart. Firing had ceased, and Pearson hailed again to ask if the "Richard" had struck. "I have not begun to fight," was the ominous reply.

From this moment the "Richard's" main deck was abandoned, and the ten guns of Pearson's main-deck battery swept that deck through and through. But the "Richard" was higher than the "Serapis;" and from her upper decks, even from her tops, a destructive fire was poured in on the English vessel. The two ships came together again and became entangled, but neither party fairly boarded the other, though Pearson once attempted to. The critical last moment came, when a grenade from the "Richard's" tops exploded some cartridges left for service on the "Serapis," and some twenty of Pearson's men were blown to pieces. Captain Pearson struck the flag with his own hand.

Meanwhile Landais, in the "Alliance," was sailing round and round, hurting his companions, as they said, more than his enemies. His contribution to the history is in these very unsatisfactory lines, which have not, till now, been printed. He was commonly charged, among the Americans, with treason, but it proved that he was insane.

Journal of Landais's Cruise in the "Alliance," dated Oct. 4, 1779.

On Saturday, the 14 August, we were the ships "Bon Homme Richard," "Alliance," "Monsieur," and "Pallas," Armed brigs "Vengeance" and "Grand-ville," and the "Cerf" cutter, in company under Groa. We all weyed Anchor and put to sea early in the morning. . . .

[Under date Sept. 23d.] Early this morning saw the "Bon H. Richard" and "Vengeance." At 2 in the afternoon, saw two ships leewards of us lying to off the land. They appeared to be men-of-war. Saw also a fleet standing for Scarboro'. Made signal and gave chace to the former, and came down to them in the evening. They proved to be the "Serapis" of 44 guns, Capt. Pearson, and the "Countess of Scarborough" of 22 guns, Capt. Piercy. An engagement immediately took place.

The "Serapis" I afterwards towd off the land, as she was disabled and had drifted within 4 miles of Flamborough head, while 3 of our boats with part of our crew were assisting on board the "B. H. Richard." All that I suffered in the engagement was in my sails and rigging, with a few shots in our hull; and this was of but very little damage.

25. The "B. H. Richard," being evacuated, sunk.

After this we made the best of our way to this place, received a pilot on board yesterday, and got up to-day.

We are now the ships "Alliance" and "Pallas," and brig "Vengeance," in company with the "Serapis" and "Countess of Scarborough," prizes.

The "Alliance" alone took 1 letter of marke, 22 guns, 2 sloops, and a brig either empty or in coals.

1 brig with the "Pallas," empty.

With the "B. H. Richard," 2 Shp., 4 Brigs, "Serap.," and "C. of S.," 226 prisoners in off. and men.

This is light language in which to describe an action in which, according to the best accounts, Landais's friends suffered from him much more than his enemies.

Meanwhile Cottineau, in the "Pallas," had engaged the "Countess of Scarborough," and had taken her. "The

'Alliance,' as I am informed," Jones writes grimly, "had fired into the 'Pallas' and killed some men."

When morning dawned after the battle, which was fought at night, it proved that the "Richard" was sinking. The "Serapis" had lost her main-mast and mizzen top-mast, which fell just as her commander struck her colors with his own hand. She had fought through the latter part of the action at anchor, so near were they all to the English shore. The merchantmen had escaped while the battle went on. The fleet was the Baltic fleet, returning to England.[1]

The crew of the "Richard" were transferred to the "Serapis." The "Richard" herself sank after the transfer had been made. The victorious squadron pursued its way to the Texel, and arrived there on the 2d of October. Here were to begin again all the difficulties of belligerents in the territory of a neutral state, which, in the beginning, Wickes and Conyngham had experienced in France. Holland had not yet recognized the independence of America. She was even bound with England by the treaty of 1678 "to break with any aggressor against her." But on the other hand, the merchants of Amsterdam — and one may say the public opinion of Holland — were in favor of America. Among the papers of Laurens, whom the English government had taken prisoner on his way to Holland, had been found the draft of a treaty of amity and commerce with the Dutch. Jones was destined to endure three months more of waiting — in Holland now — before he could again take the sea.

Franklin wrote to him from France, in acknowledgment of his official despatch, —

"For some days after the arrival of your express scarce anything was talked of at Paris and Versailles but your

[1] Not sailing to the Baltic, as Mr. Thackeray supposes in "Denis Duval."

cool conduct and persevering bravery during that terrible conflict. You may believe that the impression on my mind was not less strong than that of others; but I do not choose to say in a letter to yourself all I think on such an occasion."

In the same letter he tells Jones how much the French government is displeased with Landais, and that he had, on the day he wrote, called Landais to Paris to give an account of himself. If he refuses to come, Jones is to put him under arrest. In another chapter the reader will see what followed in the inquiry which was made in Paris regarding Landais's behavior.

Jones's correspondence with the Dutch officials and with the French ministry at this period of his detention in Holland has been already quite fully published from Miss Taylor's collection of his own papers. The reader will have to follow, for two or more years of the history, the entanglements which resulted from Landais's insubordination and the difficult ways of Dutch neutrality.

Jones himself finally left Holland in the "Alliance" on the 27th of December. On the 16th of January, 1780, he ran into Corunna, where the Spanish authorities received him with great kindness. He sailed again, after refitting, and arrived at Groix (L'Orient) on the 10th of February. He wrote to Paris, begging leave to refit the "Alliance," to sheathe her, and procure new canvas and cordage. This Franklin absolutely forbade. Jones soon found his way to Paris, where he became a lion for the time. He had placed on the "Alliance" the cannon intended for the "Richard," which had arrived too late for that vessel. A cartel from England enabled him to man her with four hundred American seamen, lately prisoners. But after all, Landais took her to sea, as will be seen in another chapter.

The following letters from Franklin to his friends in Massachusetts give his review of the naval operations of the summer.

PASSY, Oct. 17, 1779.

Honourable the Commissioners of the Navy for the Eastern Department, Boston:

GENTLEMEN, — I received the letters you did me the honour of writing to me the 30th of July and 18th of August last, by the "Mercury" packet-boat and by a French cutter; the other despatches Capt Sampson was entrusted with came all safe to hand, and I should have despatched him sooner if I had not found it necessary to detain him in order to send by him to Congress some advices of importance which could not be sooner obtained.

The cruise of our little American squadron under command of Commodore Jones, intended partly to intercept the Baltic trade, has had some success, tho' not all that was hoped for. The coasts of Britain and Ireland have been greatly alarmed, apprehending descents, it being supposed that he had land forces with him. This has put the enemy to much expence in marching troops from place to place. Several valuable prizes have been made of merchant ships, particularly two, — one from London, 300 tons and 84 men, with 22 guns, laden with naval stores for Quebec; the other from Liverpool bound to New York and Jamaica, of 22 guns and 87 men, laden with provisions and bale goods. These two are safely arrived at Bergen in Norway; two smaller prizes are arrived in France, and a number of Colliers have been burnt or ransomed. The Baltic fleet was met with, and the two men-of-war who convoyed them, viz., the "Serapis," a new ship of 44 guns, and the "Countess of Scarborough," of 20 guns, are taken, after a long and bloody engagement, and are brought into the Texel. But the merchant ships escaped during the conflict, for which

the "Alliance" and one of the other ships are blamed, whether justly or not may be enquired into. Our Commodore's ship was so shattered that she could not be kept afloat, and the people being all taken out of her, she sunk the second day after the engagement. The rest of the squadron are refitting in the Texel, from which neutral place they will be obliged soon to depart with their prizes and prisoners, near 400. I wish they may arrive safe in France, for I suppose the English will endeavour to intercept them. Jones's bravery and conduct in the action has gained him great honour.

I condole with you on the loss of your armament against Penobscot; but I suppose the sugar ships since taken and brought into your port have more than compensated the expense,[1] tho' not the disappointment of the well intended expedition. The Congress write for naval stores. I have acquainted them that I have lately been informed that stores for fitting out two 36 gun frigates, which we bought here and sent out two years ago, are still lying in the warehouses of Mr. Canabas at Cape François, having been forgotten there or never sent for. Perhaps you may obtain them. The Quebec ship, if we can get her safe home, will afford large supply.

I am much obliged to you for the newspapers. I shall direct Mr. Schweighauser to send you an account of the advances made to the officers of the "Alliance," if he has not already done it. With great respect, &c., &c.

Franklin to Austin.

Passy, Oct. 20, 1779.

Sir, — I received your several favours of June 10, July 12, and 27. It gave me pleasure to hear of your safe arri-

[1] Hutchinson, in his Diary, says they did.

val in your native country; and I am obliged to you for the intelligence your letters contain, which I hope you will continue, and for the newspapers. This campaign in Europe has not been so active as was expected, owing to contrary winds and other accidents, which a long time prevented the junction of the French and Spanish fleets, and afterwards the meeting with that of the English. But something may yet be done before winter. The American flag has, however, disturbed the British coasts, interrupted their home trade a good deal, and alarmed them with apprehensions of descents in different places. Our little squadron under Commodore Jones has also lately taken two of their men-of-war, and brought them into Holland with near 400 prisoners, which will be a means, I hope, of delivering the rest of our countrymen who are confined in English prisons. Here is nothing worth your acceptance that one can propose to you. I wish you success in any business you may undertake, being with much regard, sir, &c.

My grandson presents his respects.

A careful letter by Franklin, written perhaps with a little asperity, to the Board of Admiralty as late as March, 1781, resumes very intelligibly the naval movement of this summer. It has been printed by Mr. Sparks, and it does not seem necessary to repeat it here.

CHAPTER XV.

1779.

WHEN Temple Franklin printed, in the year 1818, the six volumes of Franklin papers, which have till now been the principal storehouse open to general readers, he hoped to publish six volumes more, and reserved for those volumes most of the letters of the later part of his grandfather's residence in France. We have now come to the period from which his extracts were more scanty; and, as we have access to the whole collection, ours will, in consequence, be more full. To bring into one chapter the narrative of Paul Jones's career, we have followed his movements through the year 1779. The reader must now return to the beginning of that year for the other matters of political interest.

Early in the year Lafayette returned to France, with the hope of quickening the interest of the French Court in America, — a hope which was not without foundation. He had sailed from Boston early in January. Franklin and he always understood each other. The following note from Franklin shows the report he brought of himself from America: —

PASSY, Feb. 19, 1779.

The Marquis de La Fayette is returned, covered with laurels.[1] He and his suite speak very handsomely of the Americans and the present condition of our affairs. All

[1] Lafayette's first letter to Vergennes after his return is dated Feb. 14, 1779.

the letters from persons in different bodies — the Congress, the army, the government of separate states — are full of his praises. By his bravery and good conduct he appears to have gained the esteem and affection of that whole continent.

With Lafayette returned some of the French officers, who had been disappointed in obtaining high positions in the American army; and as the year passed, more of them followed. Congress eventually advanced a considerable sum to pay their passage and expenses back to France.

But such views do not appear to have reversed, in the least, that current of public sentiment which flowed as strongly as ever in favor of America. As the year advanced, the French government proposed a descent, in considerable force, on the English coast. It seems as if it would have been attempted but for a failure of the Mediterranean fleet to come round through the Straits of Gibraltar in time, and for the sickness which the crews contracted on the coast of Spain on this short voyage. Indeed, the difficulty and delay of all maritime movements in this war present to readers in our day constant subjects for surprise.

The following letter will show how important the legitimate commerce between America and France began to be, and the interesting subjects which presented themselves in its infancy: —

PASSY, Jan. 26th, 79.

To Messrs. J. Lloyd, Daniel Blake, P. N. Fendall, Jo. Ross, J. Wharton, Lawrence Brooke, W. Blake, W. Thompson, M. Maese, Cha. Ogilvie, at Nantes:

GENTLEMEN, — We had yesterday the honor of your letter of the 21 of this month.

You desire to know what port or ports is or are made free pursuant to the treaty. We believe that none have

as yet been determined on. At present all the ports of France are open to American vessels of all denominations, and we are at present rather doubtful whether it would be politick in us to apply to have any distinction made. If the appointment of free ports would relieve us from the payment of duties of import or export, we should apply immediately. But as we apprehend, this advantage would not be the consequence; the limits of the free port would be prescribed, and the same duties must be paid upon removing goods within or without those limits as are now paid upon imports and exports. Goods, however, might be brought into such free ports from abroad, and there landed and stored for a time, and then exported without paying duties; but whether this would be any great advantage to our trade at present, you are better judges than we. We shall be glad of your advice upon this head; and if you think of any advantages of considerable moment that would arise, we shall be always ready to apply for such an appointment. We are sorry it is not in our power to give you any acceptable information respecting the eighth article of the treaty, which relates to the Barbary corsairs. All we can say is, that we have applied to the Ministry upon this head some months ago, and received satisfactory expressions of the dispositions of this government to do everything that is stipulated in that article of the treaty. But some things remain to be determined by Congress, to whom we have written on the subject, and we must necessarily wait their instructions.

There are two enquiries to be made, viz.: which of all the nations who now trade with France is the most favor'd? and what duties are paid by that nation? These duties, and these only, we suppose, we are to pay; and as soon as circumstances will permit, — two of us having been for a fortnight very ill and one of us continuing so, — we shall

apply to the Ministry for an éclaircissement upon this head which we will endeavour to communicate to you as soon as we shall obtain it.

We have received an answer to our last application for a convoy, from their excellencies the Count de Vergennes and M. de Sartine. But the answers convinced us that M. de Sartine was under some misinformation or misunderstanding relative to the business, which obliged us to write again. As soon as we shall be honor'd with an answer, we will communicate the result of it to you [for the Commissioners, by B. Franklin].

This is the last important letter signed by Franklin as one of the "Commissioners." Congress at last wavered in its absurd policy of sending three men to watch each other, and made him Minister Plenipotentiary. He announces this appointment in the following letter: —

Franklin to Jona. Williams, Junr.

Passy, Feb. 13, 1779.

Dear Cousin, — I have the pleasure of acquainting you that the Congress have been pleased to honor me with a sole appointment to be their Minister Plenipotentiary at this Court, and I have just received my credentials. This mark of public confidence is the more agreeable to me as it was not obtained by any solicitation or intrigue on my part, nor have I ever written a syllable to any person, in or out of Congress, magnifying my own services or diminishing those of others.

William Greene, Esqr., present Govr. of the State of Rhode Island, has sent me some bills of exchange, amounting to 1,080 livres, which he desires may be laid out in the following articles: 1 piece dark calico; 1 piece bedtick;

best silk handkerchiefs, and linnen do.; Hollands, cambricks, muslins, sewing-silk; and one box of window-glass, 7 inches by nine. I send you the commission, and desire you to forward the things by the first good oppertunity, drawing upon me for the money.

I am told you have laid aside your thoughts of going to America at present, so that you will not have the opportunity you wished for of settling your accounts there. No resolution has been yet taken by the Commissioners here relating to your proposition of settling them by arbitration at Nantes; and tho' I could now perhaps do by myself what is necessary to finish the affair in that way, yet as the transactions were in their time, it seems to me most proper that they should consent to it.

I am ever your affectionate uncle, &c., &c.

He begins his independent diplomatic career by proposing to Vergennes the plans which he and the majority of Congress would favor for the use of Count D'Estaing's fleet. These plans have never, until now, appeared in his correspondence.

Franklin to the Count de Vergennes.

Passy, February 25, 1779.

Sir, — As the enemy seems determined upon another campaign, I beg leave to communicate and submit to your excellency's consideration some sentiments of Congress on certain operations in North America, which they conceive to be practicable, and highly advantageous to the interests both of France and the U. S.

While the English continue to possess the ports of Halifax, Rhode Island, and New York, they can

1. Refit the ships of war they employ in those seas.

2. Defend more easily their fishery, a great nursery of seamen and source of wealth.

3. Interrupt more effectually by their cruisers the commerce between France and America, which would otherwise be so advantageous to both; and also the supplies of provisions of various kinds, which the French islands might draw from the Continent.

Without a naval force, and in the present situation of their finances, the reduction of some of those ports must be extremely difficult, if not impossible.

If troops should be intended for the defence of your sugar islands, and the reduction of those of the enemy in the ensuing winter, it is suppos'd that a part of them, 4 or 5000, convoy'd by four ships of the line and a few frigates, might be advantageously employ'd this summer, first, by reducing (in conjunction with the troops of the northern states) *Rhode Island.* This, it is conceiv'd, will require no long time; and being done, those states, eas'd by that means, will find themselves at liberty to afford some aid of men, transports, provisions, &c., in reducing Halifax; and there is no reason to doubt their hearty good will to concur in such an enterprize, the success of which would free their coasts from the grievous restraints under which both their commerce and their fisheries at present labour. The inhabitants of Nova Scotia, too, except those in the town of Halifax, are known to be generally well affected to the American cause, being mostly settlers who formerly emigrated from New England.

Halifax being reduc'd, the small forts on Newfoundland would easily follow, and by this means the enemy's fishery, not only for this year would be broken up, but render'd so precarious from the interruptions by our arm'd vessels, or so expensive by the force necessary to defend their fishermen, that it must soon be discourag'd, dimin-

ish'd, and at length abandon'd, — their naval strength of course much lessened, and that of France in proportion augmented.

It is supposed that the troops, being after these northern operations refreshed in New England, and well supplı'd with fresh provisions, might proceed at the approach of winter for the West Indies, in good health, and fit for such service as may be required there.

The Congress had thoughts of attacking Canada this summer, and requesting some aid of ships and men for that purpose; but as their paper money is not current in that country, where hard money alone can procure provisions, which must for want of such money be brought at a vast expense from the United States, and being salted is not so good for the men, it is uncertain whether that expedition will be attempted. There is, however, to encourage it, a good disposition in the inhabitants; and if it succeeded, the fur trade and a great vent for her manufactures would be opened to France, her fisheries would be more easily protected, and the frontiers of the States being secured, their agriculture might again be pursued in those parts, and the general strength employed where the interest of the alliance might require it.

The Congress have made no mention to me of their views with regard to New York. Perhaps they hope that the enemy will abandon it or that they shall be able to reduce it by Gen. Washington's Army.

The Commissioners here had before the treaty the honour of making in a memorial to your Excellency the following proposition by order of Congress, viz.: "that in case it is agreed that the conquest of the British sugar islands be attempted, the United States shall, on timely notice, furnish provisions for the expedition to the amount of two millions of dollars, with 6 frigates manned, of not less

than 22 guns each, with such other assistance as may be in their power, and as becoming good allies." As soon as they shall be by the aids above mentioned happily freed from the embarrassments occasioned by the lodgments of the enemy on their coasts, it will be in their power to assist much more amply in such an expedition than they can at present; and I may assure your Excellency that they will do their utmost to fulfil the expectations given by that memorial, tho' the losses in their marine, and the depreciation of their currency, since, may render it more difficult.

I need not intimate to your Excellency the great utility, if such joint operations or expeditions should be agreed to, of appointing Commanders of conciliating tempers, and if possible, who know and esteem each other, and are acquainted with both the languages. By this means the little misunderstandings apt to arise between troops of different nations might be prevented or soon remov'd and thence a greater probability of success in their enterprizes.

I have the honour to be, with the utmost esteem and respect, &c., &c.

Meanwhile Gérard, Vergennes' confidential subordinate, now at Philadelphia, wrote him from that city on the 12th of February, 1779, that he found a false view of the Treaty of Alliance prevalent in Congress. Many members considered France pledged to render more assistance than the treaty warranted. Against this view Gérard remonstrated in form; and he writes that after consideration his views were adopted, though a small opposition held the other view, among which, as it is almost needless to say, was Mr. Sam. Adams. Previously to this he had been asked to detach a part of the squadron for the recon-

quest of Georgia, but he had declined to interfere. And he alludes to a long discussion in which a project of seizing the Mississippi valley and Canada had been brought forward, to say that he disapproved of this scheme.

Franklin's first invitation, as Minister, to join with the other members of the diplomatic corps is in the following note, which perhaps deserves to be preserved as the first document of the sort in our diplomatic correspondence:—

Vergennes to Franklin.

A Versailles, le 7 Mars, 1779.

J'ai l'honneur de vous prévenir, Monsieur, que le roi ne recevra pas Mrs les Ambassadeurs et Ministres etrangers mardy prochain; au moien de quoi votre présentation ne pourra avoir lieu que le mardi, 16 de ce mois.

J'ai l'honneur d'être tres parfaitment, Monsieur, votre très humble et très obeissant serviteur,

De Vergennes.

Franklin's gout prevented his presentation at Court, in his new capacity, until the 23d of March. It is described in the following letter:—

Franklin to John Adams.[1]

Passy, April 3rd 1779.

Sir, — I received the letter you did me the honour to write to me of the 24th past. I am glad you have been at Brest, as your Presence there has contributed to expedite the Operations of Capt. Landais in Refitting his Ship. I think with you that more has been made of the Con-

[1] Mr. Adams was on board the "Alliance," awaiting her sailing. Mr. Sparks prints his cordial answer to this cordial letter, which he does not seem to have seen.

spiracy than was necessary; but that it would have been well if some of the most guilty could have received a proper punishment. As that was impracticable under our present Naval Code, I hope you will on your Return obtain an Amendment of it. I approve of cloathing the Midshipmen and petty Officers, agreable to their Request to you, and hope you have ordered it, without waiting to hear from me; and I now desire that whatever else you may judge for the good of the Service, our Friends and Circumstances considered, you would in my Behalf give Directions for; as the great Distance makes it inconvenient to send to me on every occasion; and I can confide in your Prudence, that you will allow no Expence that is unnecessary.

My Gout continues to disable me from walking longer than formerly; but on Tuesday the 23rd past, I thought myself able to go through the Ceremony, and accordingly went to Court, had my Audience of the King in the new Character, presented my Letter of Credence, and was received very graciously. After which I went the Rounds with the other Foreign Ministers, in visiting all the Royal Family. The Fatigue, however, was a little too much for my Feet, and disabled me for near another week. Upon the whole I can assure you that I do not think the good Will of this Court to the good Cause of America, is at all diminished by the late little Reverses in the Fortune of War; and I hope Spain, who has now 49 Ships of the Line, and 31 Frigates ready for Service, will soon, by declaring, turn the Scale.

Remember me affectionately to Master Johnny, and believe me, with great Esteem, Sir,

Your most obedient,
and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

This letter is interesting as showing the cordial terms on which these two colleagues parted. Before the month ended Dr. Franklin addressed the following note to "Master Johnny," — who is the second President Adams, and who, as the reader will remember, was travelling with his father.

Franklin to "Young Mr. Adams."

Passy, April 21, 1779.

Dear Master Johnny, — I am glad you have seen Brest and the fleet there. It must give you an idea of the naval force of this kingdom, which you will long retain with pleasure.

I caused the letters you inclosed to me to be carefully delivered, but have not received answers to be sent you.

Benjamin, whom you so kindly remember, would have been glad to hear of your welfare; but he is gone to Geneva. As he is destined to live in a Protestant country, and a republic, I thought it best to finish his education where the proper principles prevail.

I heartily wish you a good voyage and happy sight of your mama, — being really your affectionate friend,

B. F.

Before Franklin was presented as Plenipotentiary, he began upon measures for placing the first American loan.

Franklin to Vergennes.

Passy, March 9, 1779.

Sir, — It is with great reluctance that I give your excy. any farther troubles on the subject of a loan of money. But the bearer, Mr. Grand, who is much better acquainted with the nature and manner of such operations than I am, being of opinion that the sum we want might

with your permission and countenance be procured in France, I beg you would be so good as to hear him upon the subject, both of the necessity of obtaining such a loan, and of the means of accomplishing it.

I am ever, &c.

Lee was still making all the trouble which a man half crazy could make. There are several letters from him, in different phases of courtesy. Franklin was obliged to ask for the papers of the Commission somewhat peremptorily. When Lee assails Williams's honor, Franklin meets him squarely in the following letter: —

Franklin to Lee.

Passy, March 13, 1779.

Sir, — Finding by a note of yours on the back of M. Williams's accts. dated Oct. 6, but which I never saw till lately by accident, expressing that you are "perfectly satisfied from his own accts. that M. Williams has now and has long had in his hands upwards of an hundred thousand livres belonging to the public, which have not been employed in the public use, &c.," I have resolved to have those accounts carefully examined by impartial persons skilled in such business; and if you have any other objection to them than what appears in your note, or any other reasons than what appears upon the face of his accts. for believing such a sum in M. Williams's hands, I beg you will furnish me with them, that I may communicate them to the examiners. I wish justice to be done, and that you had shown your note either to M. Adams or me when you made it; the matter would not have been so long neglected. The money, if due, ought to be recovered immediately.

I have the honour to be, &c.

P. S. The persons I have requested to examine the accts. are the American merchants now at Nantes, with our deputed commercial agent, M. Schweighauser.

The subject is continued in this letter to his cousin:—

Franklin to Jona. Williams.

Passy, March 16, 1779.

Dear Jonathan, — Agreeable to your desire I have requested the American gentlemen residing at Nantes to examine your accounts. I have added Mr. Schweighauser, he having been appointed by my former colleagues to manage our affairs there, and may be supposed interested particularly to do justice to the Congress. And the others, I imagine, can have no interest in favouring you, as perhaps you may stand in their way respecting business. Inclosed you have copies of my letter to the gentlemen, and of another on the same business to Mr. Lee. If I had known of his going to Nantes, I should have desired him to state his objections to the accts. there; but I did not hear of his being there till a day or two before his return. I have yet no answer from him.

I showed your letter of Feby. 20, relating to M. Simeon Deane's goods, to M. Adams, who thought the proposition reasonable. I send by this opportunity an order to M. Schweighauser to deliver to you the case which remains; and if you will send me the original invoice and the form of the bills you propose, I shall sign and return them, — if no objection arises on signing them that does not at present occur to me.

I suppose you settled the affair yourself with Mercier's agent, as he took the papers from me, saying that he was going to Nantes. This was before I received yours of Feby. 23, relating to that business.

I received the bond for Collas's commission.

The following bills, drawn before the 12th of December in favour of William Denine, were presented and accepted on the 19 of Febry. last, viz.: dollars 600, 12, 600, 30, 120, 12, 120, — in all 1,494 dollars. These may possibly be a part of those you mention. I shall order payment to be stopped till I have examined the indorsements, tho' I am not sure that I can well refuse payment after having accepted them. We shall strictly examine such drafts in favour of Denine as may appear hereafter, till you let us know farther.

I return Dr. Cooper's letter, with thanks to you for communicating it. I am much obliged to that good man for his kind expressions of regard to me.

The tobacco which came in the "Bergene," and all the tobacco which comes to us from America, is to be delivered directly out of the ships to the Agents of the Farmers-General in the ports where it arrives. I had sent orders accordingly before the receipt of your notice of her arrival.

I am ashamed of the orders of my countrymen for so much tea, when necessaries are wanting for clothing and defending!

I have been long ill and unfit to write or think of writing, which occasioned my omitting to answer before your several letters since the 16 of February. I omitted also answering a kind letter from M. Ridley, who, I suppose, is now gone. If not, present my respects to him, and best wishes of a prosperous voyage and happy sight of his friends. I am getting better, and hope our correspondence will now be more regular.

I am ever yr affectionate uncle, B. F.

In June Lee writes in this formal fashion: "Mr. Lee will be obliged to Dr. Franklin if he will order an authen-

ticated copy to be made for him of the letter from the Commissioners to the Count de Vergennes, on the agreement with Hortalez & Co., dated Passy, Sept. 10, 1778, with a copy of his Excellency's answer, which Mr. Lee does not remember to have seen." And that correspondence closes when Lee, in the most tart manner possible, asks for a renewal of his passport. Franklin's opinion of him was summed up in the words, "I am persuaded, however, that he means well for his country, is always an honest man, often a wise one; but sometimes, and in some things, absolutely out of his senses."[1] In another place he writes, "In sowing jealousies and suspicions, in creating quarrels and misunderstandings among friends, in malice, subtlety, and indefatigable industry, he has, I think, no equal."

Mr. Vaughan, in publishing the notes on the Aurora Borealis, which may be found in the fifth volume of Mr. Sparks's collection, says, "If I mistake not, the paper was read at the Royal Academy of Sciences, at their first meeting after Easter, 1779." It was undoubtedly written at that time, and was probably a subject of conversation at the meeting. But, as has been said, none of Franklin's papers have been printed by the Academy, as regular memoirs presented at their meetings.

The following letters explain themselves, and show the variety of interests which occupied the Plenipotentiary, "who can neither stand nor go:" —

Franklin to Montaudoin.

Passy, March 17, 1779.

Dear Sir, — I received your favour of the 4th inst., by M. David with much pleasure, as it informed me of the

[1] Diplomatic Cor., iv. 139; and Works, ix. 535.

welfare of friends I love, and who are indeed beloved by everybody. I thank you for your kind congratulations, and for the prayer you use in my behalf. Tho the form is heathen, there is a good Christian spirit in it; and I feel myself very well disposed to be content with this world, which I have found hitherto a tolerable good one, and to wait for heaven (which will not be the worse for keeping) as long as God pleases. In short, I should have no objections to living with you and Mrs. Montaudoin in France another century. I don't complain much even of the gout, which has harassed me ever since the arrival of the commission you so politely mention. There seems, however, some incongruity in a plenipotentiary who can neither stand nor go. With the sincerest esteem, respect, and affection, I am, &c.

Franklin to Dumas [*American Agent in Holland*].

Passy, March 18, 1779.

Dear Sir, — I received duly yours of the 3 inst. My indisposition seems to be wearing off, and I hope will permit me to go abroad in a few days.

Mr. Neufville's first propositions were so much out of the way that I could not accept them. He required a fifth part of the loan to be sent over to him annually during the first five years, in the produce of America for sale, and the money to remain in his hands as a fund for paying off the debt in the last 5 years. By this means he would have had the use of our money while we were paying interest for it. He dropt this demand on my objecting to it, and undertook to procure a subscription on reasonable terms. I wish him success; but as the English give at present higher interest than I am permitted to offer, I have little dependance on that subscription. Let me know what you hear of it from time to time.

M. Adams is gone to Nantes to take his passage for America in one of our frigates. Mr. A. Lee has retired from Chaillot to Paris, and his brother has come on a visit from Frankfort. He talks of a Congress to be held in Germany, and seems to want me to advise his attendance there incogn. I know nothing of it, or of any use he can be there, and therefore can give no advice about it. He talks of 20,000 men at liberty by the German peace to be hired by the English against us, and would be employed in preventing it. What do you think or learn of these circumstances?

The present situation of affairs in your country is interesting. Unacquainted as I am with your parties and interests, I find it difficult to conceive how they will terminate.

Franklin to Sykes.[1]

Passy, March 18, 1779.

Sir, — I return you enclosed Mr. Haywood's letter, and am much obliged to you for communicating it, as it acquainted me of the welfare of some friends whom I much esteem, — Mr. and Mrs. Naeme, — and at the same time informed me of that most ingenious invention of Mr. Haywood's for making globes, which I much admire. Mr. Whitchurch never delivered that he did me the favor to design for me. Perhaps it was broke by some accident, or lost. Please to present my thankful acknowledgements, however, and assure Mr. Haywood of my respects. I have the honour to be, sir, &c., &c.

I shall take the liberty of calling to see your warehouse the first convenient opportunity.

[1] There is a funny note from Sykes. He has mended Franklin's spectacles, but cannot find his handkerchief.

[On a separate paper.]

P. S. If those plaister globes are heated hot in an oven, — after the bread is taken out, — and then washed over with melted *hot* white wax, by means of a soft hair brush, the wax will penetrate $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch, and so toughen the surface; may afterwards be polished by rubbing it with a silk handkerchief; it will look like marble; and may at any time be washed if flies or smoke, &c., should dirty it.

B. F.

Mr. Sykes is requested to send this to Mr. Haywood.

Franklin to Chardon [*Maître des Requêtes*].

Passy, ce 19 Mars, 1779.

Monsieur, — J'ai lu avec admiration votre requisitoire sur le procès du Capitaine McNeil. Heureux sont les rois qui ont des magistrats aussi savants et aussi habile que vous, Monsieur, pour éclairer leur justice. J'en sens tout le bonheur pour la nation Américaine que j'ai l'honneur de représenter en cette cour; elle sçaura, Monsieur, qu'elle y est traitée en frère, et que vous l'y defendez en ami. Agreez l'hommage de ma reconnaissance, et les sentiments distingués avec lesquels j'ai l'honneur d'être, Monsieur,

Votre très humble et
très obéissant serviteur, B. F.

Franklin to Sayre.

Passy, March 31, 1779.

Sir, — I have just received your favour of the 10th inst. from Copenhagen. The account you give of the disposition of the Swedish Court is very agreeable. I saw in the news-papers that a deputy of Congress was at Stockholm; did you obtain the audiences you mention on assuming that character? The information you did not choose to

venture by the post from Copenhagen may be safely sent from Amsterdam.

I am not, as you have heard, the sole representative of America in Europe. The commissions of Mr. A. Lee, Mr. Wm. Lee, and Mr. Izard, to different courts still subsist. I am only sole with regard to France. Nor have I power to give any employ worth your accepting.

Much has been said by the English about divisions in America. No division of any consequence has arisen there. Petty disputes between particular persons about private interests there are always in every country; but in regard to the great point of Independence there is no difference of sentiment in the Congress; and as the Congress are the annual choice of the people, it is easy to judge of their sentiments by those of their representatives.

The taking of Savannah makes a noise in England, and helps to keep up their spirits; but I apprehend before the summer is over, they will find the possession of that Capital of Georgia of as little consequence as their former possessions of Boston and Philadelphia; and that the distempers of that unwholesome part of the country will very much weaken, if not ruin that army.

The principal difficulty at present in America consists in the depreciation of paper currency, owing to the over-quantities issued, and the diminished demand of it in Commerce. But as the Congress has taken measures for sinking it expeditiously, and the several governments are taxing vigorously for that purpose, there is a prospect of its recovering a proper value. In the meantime, tho an evil to particulars, there is some advantage to the public in the depreciation, as large nominal values are more easily paid in taxes, and the debt by that means more easily extinguished.

Franklin to Lloyd.

PASSY, May 4, 1779.

DEAR SIR, — I received the letter you did me the honour to write me of the 10th past. As you seem to have some reliance on my advice in the affair you mention, I ought to give it candidly and sincerely. And it must therefore be, not to accept of the offer made you. If you carry your family to America, it is, I suppose, with the intention of spending the remainder of your days in your own country. This cannot be done happily without maintaining the general good opinion of your countrymen. Your entering by that door will unavoidably subject you to suspicions; those suspicions will render your situation uncomfortable. I think therefore you had better conclude to stay where you are till peace, tho' under some present inconveniences. The circumstances of such a family will always justify this, wherever you shall arrive, in America. Please to make my affectionate respects acceptable to your amiable lady, and believe me, with sincere esteem, dear sir, &c., &c.

Franklin to J. Adams.

PASSY, May 10, 1779.

SIR, — I received the honour of yours of the 29th past from Nantes. I hope you are before this time safely arrived at L'Orient. Mr. de la Luzerne is making diligent preparation for his departure, and you will soon see him. He and the Secretary of the Embassy are both very agreeable and sensible men, in whose conversation you will have a great deal of pleasure in your passage. What port the ship will be ordered to I have not yet learnt. I suppose that may be partly left to the captain's discretion, as

the winds may happen to serve. It must certainly be most agreeable to you to be landed in Boston, as that will give you an earlier sight of your family; but as you propose going immediately to Congress, being landed in Philadelphia will have some little advantage, as it saves half your journey. I shall take care to procure the order to the captain from Mr. Sartine which you desire, tho' I should suppose showing the original letter of that minister, which you have, would be sufficient.

No public despatches are arrived here since you left us. The anniversary of the signing of the treaty was observed with great festivity by the Congress at Philadelphia. From Holland I have just received the resolution of the States General of the 26th, to convoy their trade, notwithstanding Sir Joseph York's memorial, and to fit out directly 32 ships of war for that purpose, which is good news and may have consequences.

I have the honour to be, with great regard, Sir,

Your most obedient

and most humble servant, B. F.

Franklin to Bache [*his son-in-law*].

Passy, June 2, 1779.

Dear Sir, — I have received yours of June [? Jan.] 16. You observe that you seldom hear from mé; I have the same reason to complain, but I do not complain of you. It is the loss of ships, and the sinking of despatches when chased, that cuts our correspondence to pieces.

Yours of Oct. 22, gave me a good deal of satisfaction in informing me of the adventures of your family, your return to Philada., welfare, &c.

You desire me to set the price of the printing-house sold to Virginia; but I have received no account of the

particulars whereof it consisted. Did they take the cases as well as the types; and what were the number? There was a large mahogany press that cost me 25 guineas, and a small one that cost 12 guineas; did they take those? and did they take all the letters, flowers, &c., &c., Except the five cases of money types which you say the Congress have taken? If so, you may make out the account in this manner. As the price of the types in England was, for some, 55 a pound, some 156, and some a shilling, and the flowers, of which there was a great quantity, 51, and it will be difficult now to come at the weight of the several sorts, I suppose it may be equitable to estimate the whole weight at 18d., and the cases at 31 each, all sterling, and then allow me such an advance, in sterling also, as European goods sold for at the time. I hope, indeed, they did not take the presses, for I should be unwilling to part with them, as they were made under my own inspection with improvements; and also a stone belonging to the press, and a number of iron chases or frames for fixing the pages, and many other things which I know not whether they have taken or not, which may be valued by any printer.

The scripts letters which the Congress have taken cost me double the price of common letters of the same sizes; the long pica and long primer bill I remember amounted to forty pounds sterling. What I gave for the larger sort I have forgotten, but suppose about ten pounds. You may therefore settle that in the same manner as to the advance, &c. And when you are paid you may send [end of record].

Franklin to Jay.

Passy, June 2, 1779.

Dear Sir, — I received a few days since, by way of St. Eustachia, the duplicate of a letter you did me the honor

to write me of 3d January. But the Act of Congress of Dec. 23 which you mention is not come to hand. Col. S. Duicks, whom the Secretary names to you, called here in his way to Holland, and brought me a recommendatory letter from Govr. Trumbull; but neither himself nor that letter mentioned anything of his business in Holland, except to see his friends; so that I yet know of nothing to the purport of that act. The other, of Jan. 1, is come to hand. Besides the reasons given in it for deferring the expedition to Canada, there is one that would weigh much with me, and that is our want of sufficient quantity of hard money. The Canadians are afraid of paper, and would never take the Congress money. To enter a country which you mean to make a friend of, with an army that must have occasion every day for fresh provision, horses, carriage labour of every kind, having no acceptable money to pay those that serve you, and to be obliged therefore, from the necessity of the case, to take that service by force, — is the sure way to disgust, offend, and by degrees make enemies of the whole people; after which all your operations will be more difficult, all your motions discovered, and every endeavour used to have you driven back out of their country.

I need not recommend the Chevalier de la Luzerne to the President of Congress. His public character will recommend him sufficiently to all the respect and consideration due to the Minister of so great and good a prince as the King of France, our ally. I shall only mention that his private character here is an excellent one, and that he is connected by relation to some of the greatest and best people of this country. I hope that his residence with us will be made agreeable to him. I have written largely to the Committee. By our last advices from Holland the English interest diminishes there; and from England they

write that the daily apprehension of a war with Spain begins to have a serious effect in disposing people generally to wish for peace. Great preparations are making here in all the seaports; and this summer will probably produce some important action. With great respect and esteem, &c., &c.

Franklin to Hopkinson.

Passy, June 4, 1779.

Dear Friend, — I received your kind letter of the 22d October last, which gave me great pleasure, as it informed me of your welfare, and of your appointment to the honorable office of treasurer of loans. I think the Congress judged rightly in their choice; and exactness in accounts and scrupulous fidelity in matters of trust are qualities for which your father was eminent, and which I was persuaded were inherited by his son when I took the liberty of naming him one of the executors of my will, — a liberty which I hope you will excuse.

I am sorry for the losses you have suffered by the Goths and Vandals, but hope it will be made up to you by the good providence of God, and the good-will of your country, to whom your pen has occasionally been of service.

I am glad the enemy have left something of my gimcrackery that was capable of affording you pleasure. You are therefore very welcome to the use of my electrical and pneumatic machines as long as you think proper.

I enclose you a little piece or two of Oxford wit which I lately received, hoping they may afford you a few minutes' amusement. Present my respects to your good mother and sisters, and believe me ever, &c.

P. S. Permit me to recommend the new Minister, Mr. le Chevalier de Luzerne, to your civilities, as a gentleman

of most admirable character, and a hearty friend of the American cause. If you can in any respect be serviceable to him, you will much oblige me.

Franklin to Messrs. J. Rocquette, J. Elsvier, and Brothers Rocquette.

Passy, June 13, 1779.

Gentlemen, — I received your favour of the 7th instant, enclosing two notes of the United States, for 1000 dollars each, for my inspection, which I return inclosed. I have not yet seen the resolution mentioned therein, but by what I can recollect from the face of the notes themselves, I judge that the dollars for which the notes are given were of paper money borrowed, and that the interest will be paid and the principal repaid in the same paper, which is now in state of great depreciation. If before the time of payment it should fall still lower, the possessor of the notes will be so much the loser; if on the contrary they should rise in value, — of which, from the measures taken for that purpose, there is great appearance, — the possessor will be in proportion a gainer. The interest will be paid every year, but is payable only at the loan office in America, from whence the bills issued, and to that end they must be produced there, that the payment may be indorsed. These bills have therefore been improperly brought to Europe, being of less value here, as they must return to have their effect; and being *sola* bills, payable to the bearer, they have not the same security from the dangers of the sea that bills of exchange usually have; for they may not only be lost or destroyed by accidents, but if taken, the enemy will reap the benefit of them. The insurance of them back is therefore a proportionate diminution of their value. At what value they

are at present current in America, I cannot inform you, that depending on the fluctuating state of the paper there; nor do I know where they can be so well negotiated as the place where they are payable.

I have the honour to be, &c.

Franklin to Jona. Williams.

Dear Cousin, — The bearer, Mr. Genet, Junior, a young gentleman of excellent character, goes to Nantes with an intention of spending a little time there in improving himself in the English language by conversing among our countrymen. I desire you would introduce him to their acquaintance, and I recommend him warmly to all your civilities, which I shall esteem as done to myself.

I am ever

Your affectionate uncle,

B. F.

This is the Genet subsequently so notorious in the early years of our national history.

Franklin to Dubourg.

Passy, Aug. 13, 1779.

Dear Sir, — Having begun the affair of our loan by the means of our friend M. Ferdinand Grand, banker, Rue Montmartre, he is in possession of all the particulars relating to it, and can fully satisfy the curiosity of the person who enquires thro' you. I need only mention in answer to your 8th query, that the money borrowed being to be laid out in France for arms, ammunition, soldiers' clothing, &c., that it will not answer our purpose to take any money but such as is current in France, and the American paper has no business here. Those who have

brought any of it into France — except bills of exchange — have committed a folly, in exposing their property to two risques for nothing; as it must go back again to find its value.

With regard to your proposition concerning your property in America: I should be glad to assist you in it, but I do not conceive it practicable. First, because the Congress has no lands in its disposition; the vacant lands are all in some or other of the particular states; they dispose of them by general rules; and an application to them for a deviation from those general rules in favour of a particular person will hardly be attended to; for they will apprehend that having done it in favour of one they will be urged to do it for many, which would be attended with many great public inconveniences.

I am ever, my dear friend, &c., &c.

Franklin to Mr. Charles Epp [*Procureur at Altorf, Switzerland*].

Passy, Augt. 27, 1779.

Sir, — I received the letter you did me the honour to write to me concerning your inclination to remove to America. In so great a country as is at present possessed by the thirteen United States, extending through such different climates, and having such a variety of soils and situations, there is no doubt but you might, if you were there, find one to your mind. Lands in general are cheap there, compared with the prices in Europe. The air is good, there are good governments, good laws, and good people to live with. And as you would probably make a good citizen, there is no doubt of your meeting with a welcome among them. But since you are in easy circumstances where you are, and there is no immediate neces-

sity for your removing, I cannot advise your making such a voyage with a family at this time, when, if taken by the enemy, you might be subject to many inconveniences.

I have the honour to be, sir, &c., &c.

Franklin to Stadel.

Passy, Oct. 20, 1779.

Sir, — I received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me, enclosing a project of raising a regiment for the service of the United States, of which you desire my sentiment. The Congress, I believe, have never had any intention of raising troops in Europe and transporting them to America: the expense would be too great for them, and the difficulty extreme, as the English command the seas, and would often intercept their transports. And having myself no orders relative to such an object, that might authorize me to encourage the project, I cannot give the least acceptation that it would be accepted. We are nevertheless obliged to the officer for his friendship in making the proposition, and I request that my thanks, in behalf of my country, may be presented to him. I have the honour to be, Sir, &c., &c.

Franklin to Commercial Committee of Congress, Phila.

Passy, Oct. 21, 1779.

Gentlemen, — I received the honour of yours dated the 21st of July, containing an extract from Mr. Pollock's letter[1] to you, in which he mentions his drafts on Mr. Delap for 10,897 dollars, and his expectation that in case of any difficulty I will see those bills paid. I should certainly do everything in my power to support the credit of

[1] Oliver Pollock was the spirited American merchant in New Orleans who rendered material service, in the early days, to the new-born nation.

the States, and every person acting under their authority; but I have been so exhausted by great and unexpected drafts and expenses, that I am glad those bills have never been proposed to me, as I could not have taken upon myself to pay them. And I beg that you would not in future have any dependance of that kind upon me without knowing beforehand from me that I shall be able to pay what is desired. I hope you will excuse my giving this caution, which is forced from me by the distress and anxiety such occasional and unforseen demands have occasioned me.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, &c., &c.

Franklin to Holker.

Passy, Oct. 28, 1779.

Dear Sir, — Inclosed I send you a packet I have just received from Morlaix, containing some of the papers you requested me to recover, and a receipt for the rest. You will see what Mr. Diot says about the trunks of clothes. It will be best, I imagine, for the person who desires to have them, if he knows which they are, to describe them to Mr. Diot or some other person, and order them to be bid for at the sale. I received a quantity of apple jelly, but no letter. If it was for me, 1000 thanks to Good Made. Holker, I am ever, my dear friend, &c., &c.

Franklin to Messrs. Fizeaux & Grand.

Passy, Oct. 29, 1779.

Gentlemen, — I have advice from England that 8 boxes of printing characters are sent from London, to your care for me. If they are arrived, I request you would ship them to Rouen, addressed to Mr. Holker here. I

suppose you have Dutch vessels frequently going there. Their value is about 100£ sterling, which I desire you to get insured. Whatever charge you are at, I shall repay with thanks. I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

Franklin to M. Des Landes.

PASSY, Nov. 23, 1779.

SIR, — Not understanding well enough the French language and the technical terms used in the description of your observatory, I cannot form from the description such an idea of its situation and circumstances as might enable me to answer the questions you propose to me. But as my learned and ingenious friend Mr. Le Roy,[1] member of the Academy of Sciences, is perfectly well acquainted with the subject, I have put your papers into his hands, and request the favor of him to give you the information you desire.

Franklin to Joshua Johnson.[2]

PASSY, Dec. 29, 1779.

SIR, — I am much obliged by your kind attention in sending me from time to time the American newspapers that have come to your hands. Please to accept my thankful acknowledgements.

I have the pleasure now to acquaint you that tho' my application, at your request, for arms or a loan of money for your province in particular was not attended with success, — the opinion here being (as I think I formerly wrote you) that all such applications should regularly come to the Congress, — yet an aid being now lately granted to that body for the whole, there is no doubt

[1] See chapter i.

[2] A merchant in Nantes. His daughter was afterwards Mrs. J. Q. Adams.

but Maryland will obtain its share of what shall arrive in America.

If I have not corresponded with you so punctually as you might expect, and as I could have wished to do, I pray you to excuse me; I have had too much business, with too little help. The constant expectation of a secretary, who had long been voted but did not arrive, prevented my engaging such assistance as I wanted, and I have not been able by increased application fully to supply the deficiency.

I do not understand that by the treaty of alliance between France and America, an American taking a house and settling in France to carry on business is exempted from the duties and services that would have been required of a native of France inhabiting the same house. The droit d'aubaine is indeed abolished in our favour, but in other respects I should suppose that Americans settled here, as well as Frenchmen settled in America, must, while they live as inhabitants, be subject to the laws of the respective countries, of which they at the same time claim and enjoy the protection. I am sorry however that you find this so inconvenient as to induce you to quit the kingdom. Particular circumstances may have occasioned the quartering of soldiers on the inhabitants last year, which in time of peace may rarely happen.

Lafayette spent most of the year 1779 in France engaged in constant efforts, which were generally successful, for the American cause. At the order of Congress, Franklin had a beautiful sword made, and presented it to him in their name. The correspondence on this subject has been long since published. As the reader has seen, there was at one time a plan that Lafayette should lead a French force in a descent on England from Jones's

squadron. But so soon as the larger plan was brought forward, his hopes in this direction were disappointed. He wrote freely to Franklin through the year, and his letters are always interesting. The series closes with his announcement, in December, of the birth of the boy who would be called George Washington.[1]

Franklin wrote to the Massachusetts council the following letter regarding him and other French officers: —

Passy, June 4, 1779.

Honble. The Council of the Massachusetts Bay:

Honble. Gentlemen, — The Commissioners at this Court received the letters you did them the honour of writing to them, recommending the Marquis de la Fayette. I immediately sent it to be perused by the Ministers who desire to have a copy of it. He was very favourably received by his Majesty and has had given him a regiment of dragoons. He retains the warmest zeal for the American cause, and affection for the people; and has been continually moving something or other with the Ministry for the advantage of America, ever since his arrival. The Chevalier De Ramondis too retains the most grateful sense of the attention paid him by your government during his illness under the loss of his arm; several other officers speak highly in favour of our country on account of the civilities they received there, which has a very good effect here, and evinces the wisdom of the conduct you are accustomed to pursue with regard to strangers of merit. I thought it right to acquaint you with these circumstances, and I do it with more pleasure, as it gives me an opportunity of assuring you of the great respect with which I have the honour to be, &c., &c.

[1] Born 1779, died 1856.

P. S. If the Chevalier de la Luzerne, who is going to America to succeed M. Gérard as Minister from this Court should happen to put into Boston, you will find him every way deserving of the civilities he may receive independent of his public character. He is much esteemed and respected here, has great connections, and is a hearty friend to the cause of Liberty and America.

These are Franklin's last notes to Lafayette in this visit: —

PASSY, Jan. 18, 1780.

M. Le Marq's De La Fayette:

DEAR SIR, — Being unavoidably detained from going to Versailles to-day as intended, I must beg of you when you present those officers to Mr. de Vergennes, to say for me what I should have said if I could have been present, — that I have been made well acquainted with their great merit and the high reputation they have acquired in our country by their valour and their good conduct; and that I am persuaded that, if his Majesty should think fit to honour them with any marks of his favour in consideration of their services to the United States, it will be extreamly pleasing to Congress, and to the people of America. I am ever, with the greatest esteem and affection,

Dear Sir, &c., &c.,

Franklin to Lafayette.

PASSY, Oct. 1, 1779.

DEAR SIR, — It is a long time since I did myself the honour of writing to you; but I have frequently had the pleasure of hearing of your welfare.

Your kindness to my grandson in offering to take him under your wing in the expedition is exceedingly obliging to me. Had the expedition gone on, it would have been

an infinite advantage to him to have been present with you, so early in life, at transactions of such vast importance to great nations. I flatter myself too, that he might possibly catch from you some tincture of those engaging manners that make you so much the delight of all that know you. Accept, however, my warmest and most grateful acknowledgements.

I send you enclosed a newspaper containing the particulars of Wayne's gallant attack of Stoney Point. This is good news. But it is followed by some bad, the loss of our little squadron from Boston at Penobscot, which it is said our people were obliged to blow up. I hope Count D'Estaing's arrival in America will give us revenge. Six thousand troops are ordered to the West Indies to secure your conquests, and, I hope, make more. But I do not hear of any intention to send any to our country. I have no orders to request troops, but large ones for supplies, and I dare not take any further steps than I have done such a proposition without orders. Accept in behalf of the Congress my thankful acknowledgements for your zeal to serve America. Occasions may offer which at present do not appear, wherein your bravery and conduct may be highly useful to her.

May every felicity attend you is the wish of, dear sir, yours, &c., &c.

Franklin to Lafayette.

Passy, Nov. 10, 1779.

Dear Sir, — My answer to the questions contained in the letter you have honoured me with must be very short. I can only say that I know nothing of the reasons. I can therefore give no opinion, having no materials on which to form it.

A vessel from North America, arrived at Cadiz, reports

that Count D'Estaing's fleet arrived off the Capes of Virginia the 14th of September, since which date we hear nothing of him; and this account seems not very certain.

American news there is none but what was in the English papers. They talk of Clinton's going with a strong force to Charles-town. But possibly D'Estaing's arrival may prevent that, and I hope much good from his visit to our coasts. There are four strokes for him to make, — New York, Rhode Island, Halifax, and Newfoundland, if he is really gone there; but perhaps he went to Jamaica. General Prevost has certainly desired to be recalled; he complains much of having been neglected, and not furnished with the re-inforcements, and other aids and necessaries that he had required, and that had been promised to him. We are in the way of filling England with discontented generals and admirals.

Many, many thanks for your kindness to my grandson and may God's blessing ever attend you. With the sincerest esteem and affection, I am, Dear Sir, &c., &c.

Lafayette's last letter to Franklin, resuming what he had done in France, was written February 29, 1780. It is printed in Sparks's collection.

Early in the year 1780 Lafayette addressed the following letter to Mr. Adams: —

PARIS, February 7, 1780.

DEAR SIR, — As I came but this morning from Versailles it was not in my power sooner to answer to the letter you have honored me with, and this duty I now perform with the more pleasure that it is of some importance to the interest of America.

Since the first day when I had the happiness of making myself, and of being considered in the world, as an American, I have always observed that among so many ways

of attacking our liberties, and among them the most ungenerous ones, treachery and falsehood have ever been the first weapons on which the British nation have the most depended.

I am glad it is in my power generally to assure you that the many reports propagated by them, and alluded to in your letter, are not founded upon truth. These contracts with petty German princes have not, I believe, taken place. And if any such merchandise was sent to America it would at most consist of a few recruits.

The troubles in Ireland, if there is the least common sense amongst the first patriots in that country, are not, I hope, at an end, and it seems they now begin to raise new expectations.

The Russian troops so much talked of in their gazette I take to be more recruits for the thirty thousand Russians that Mr. Rivington had three years ago ordered to embark for America.

These intelligences, my dear Sir, be counteracted by letters to our friends in America. But as the respect we owe to the free citizens of the United States makes it a point of duty for us never to deceive them, and as the most candid frankness must ever distinguish our side of the question from the cause of tyranny and falsehood, I intend paying to-morrow morning a visit to the minister of foreign affairs, and from him get so minuted intelligences as will answer your purpose.

With the most sincere Regard and friendly affection, I have the honor to be, dear Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

LAFAYETTE.

P. S. On my return from Versailles, my dear Sir, where I will settle the affair of —— that I had undertaken, I will

impart you a project privately, relating to one that is not inconsistent with my sentiments for our country — America.

In one of the French letters of this summer, from an unknown man who wishes to emigrate, — letters so numerous and so effusive that they are very tedious, — appears the national motto, "E pluribus unum." It has been remembered that these words first appear in Virgil's account of a salad-dressing, in his little poem "Moretum." This French letter is perhaps their first application to the union of the thirteen States.

We know now that the French officers in America sent home, in some instances, statements almost disloyal to the country which commissioned and fed them.

As early as December, 1777, De Portail had written that he doubted the American success. "The Americans have been used to idleness, to drinking tea and rum, to smoking, &c.: they will not hold out in such a war. It will not do to think of sending a French force to act in concert with them. They have a violent antipathy to the French; they would sooner go over to the British army than fight with the French." Such is Hutchinson's digest of the letter of an officer in the American service.[1] It was no misfortune to America that the English took the ship which carried it.

[1] Hutchinson's Diary, ii. 309.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PRIVATEERS FROM DUNKIRK.

THE old town of Dunkirk was always a breeding-place for smugglers, privateers, and even for pirates. For centuries it had been famous as a seaport. Even in the time of the crusades did fleets fit out in Dunkirk. Later, being fortified and made a place of great strength, it was constantly besieged and captured, now in the hands of one party, and now of another. Successively occupied and fortified by Flemish, Spanish, French, English, and French again, the sailors of Dunkirk made for themselves a mighty reputation as terrors of the narrow seas. Fortified into a place of immense strength by the genius of Vauban, and withstanding all the attacks of the Triple Alliance in the war, Dunkirk succumbed to the diplomats, and according to the treaty of Utrecht, its great fortifications were pulled down and thrown into its harbor; and although at each successive outbreak of war the walls were again lifted up, in the successive treaties of Aix la Chapelle and of Paris the clauses which condemned them to destruction were reaffirmed. But although Dunkirk was not now a place of importance in war, the sailors still swarmed about her docks and quays. They were of all nationalities, English, Scotch, Irish, Dutch, and French, and knew all the neighboring coasts, on which they followed the hardy and dangerous trade of smuggling. One may imagine that this population would be keenly alive

to those prospects which would open up at the hope of a war between England and France. Before this, indeed, had the privateers been busy at Dunkirk. It was from Dunkirk that Conyngham sailed in the "Surprise," and afterwards in the "Revenge." Two worthy business men, Franz Coffyn and John Torris, on the lookout for their own profits as well as for those of the Commissioners, were Franklin's agents at the port. Shortly after the signing of the Treaty of Alliance, it occurred to Coffyn that all the raw material drifting about Dunkirk might be utilized; and on the 12th of April he wrote to Franklin:—

Honoured Sir, — The warr which was expected to be declared soon after the notification made by the Count of Noailles to the British of the Treaty concluded between France and America having not yet taken place, this keeps in suspense diverse merchants who were inclined to fit out privateers to annoy the trade of the common enemy; but as no French Commissions can be granted before the declaration of war, I know that some of these merchants would be glad to obtain Commissions from Congress to fit out their vessels under the colours of the United States, provided it should be allowed to bring the prizes into the French ports. I take the liberty to request your opinion on these two points, whether such commissions can be granted by the Hon'ble Commissioners, and whether the prizes taken in virtue of the same could be brought into the ports of this kingdom and sold for the captors.

At great length he goes on to propound a scheme which occurs to him. Here is one Christopher Ferron, a noted Irish smuggler (and there are many more of his stamp about the port), who knows the coasts of Ireland,

Scotland, England, and Holland better than he knows the four corners of his bed. Why not utilize all this material by fitting out privateers, filling them up with these English, Scotch, and Irish who would fight under American commissions, and if taken would cause no trouble to any one, for they would all swear that they were American? They could not take French commissions, for they could not pass as Frenchmen; but under American colours they would do good service.

We find no notice afterwards of any direct result from this note. But though no use was at this time made of the suggestion, at a later time the same idea was put into effect by Torris. It was in the spring of 1779, that the "Black Prince" privateer was fitted out, commissioned (24th of May), and sent to sea under Stephen Marchant with a mixed crew of various nationalities, who knew the narrow seas well, and were prepared to give a good account of themselves if attacked by a man-of-war. The captain took an oath of allegiance to the United States, but it does not appear that the crew joined in this protestation of loyalty.

The "Black Prince" did well both in the matter of prizes and of prisoners; though, being a small vessel and parting with her crew to man prizes, it was deemed inexpedient to retain the prisoners, and they were let go on giving a paper in which each one promised to see that an American prisoner was exchanged in his place. But to these paroles the English authorities paid not the slightest regard, as was indeed natural. The captured sailors had no authority to promise the release of an American seaman in case they were let go free; and indeed if they had not chosen to give such papers, they would probably in most cases have been allowed to go, all the same, on account of the difficulty of retaining them until the

privateers made port. Franklin felt much outraged at their course, as we may see from the following letter.

PASSY, Feb. 9, 1780.

To Capt. Patrick Dowlin of the "Black Prince" at Mr. Chancey's, Mercht in Roscow:

SIR, — I received yours of the 27th past. I congratulate you on the success you have had against our enemies, of which I had the pleasure of hearing before by the copy of your journal sent me by Mr. Diot. The prisoners you have brought in will soon procure us the liberty of as many of our countrymen, who have long been confined in the gaols of Great Britain. It is therefore an essential piece of service to the United States; and as the English pay no regard to the written paroles formerly taken from the men who were prisoners to the "Black Prince" and set at liberty, I think it right that you should trust no more to the honour of that nation, which has refused to return us a single man or account of those paroles, and of others taken by the "General Mifflin" and the "Hancock" privateers to the amount of 220 men; and for the future, I desire that you would secure your prisoners as well as you can, and lodge them in French or Spanish gaols, by which means you will have the satisfaction of relieving many poor captives and recommending yourself to the favour of Congress. I wish you a prosperous cruise, and have the honour to be, Sir, Yours, &c.

The first cruise of the "Black Prince" was so successful that it was resolved to fit out a consort to cruise in company. The "Black Princess" was commissioned in the summer of 1779,[1] and in the fall of that year the same

1 "These successes have determined the proprietors to fit out another cutter of 60 ft. keel and 20 ft. beam, mounting 16 3-pounders, 24 swivels

owners added the "Fearnot." Exactly who these owners were does not appear. Torris seems to have been the chief man concerned. Coffyn had undoubtedly some share. John Diot, of Morlaix, was also interested. The crews and captains were generally taken from the Irish and English smugglers which crowded the port. Stephen Marchant, the first commander of the "Black Prince," and Edward Macatter, the commander of the "Princess," were, we believe, Irishmen from Boston. Patrick Dowlin and Luke Ryan, of the "Black Princess" and the "Fearnot,"[1] were Irishmen from Dunkirk

These successes could not last forever. The "Black Prince," after several cruises, came to an untimely end, as we learn from a letter to Franklin from Torris: —

Apr. 15th, DUNKIRQUE.

HONOURED SIR, — With unexpressible grief I have the honnour to acquaint your Excellency with the loss of our poor "Black Prince," Captⁿ Dowlin. She has suffered all the hardships she ever could from the French these few weeks past. The self-conceited and weak commissary of Morlaix has forced my correspondant there to disembark the 22ᵈ to 25ᵗʰ ultᵒ., all her men that would cruise no longer, altho' they had 32 days more to compleat their engagement; the crew was reduced to 53 men, which hindered Mr. Dowlen to venture north about. He sailed from Roscoft for this Harbour the 6ᵗʰ inst. The 7ᵗʰ he took and sent for Cherbourg the "Flora," Dutch Brig, Hendrick Roudenberg master, because she appeared by her bills of

and small arms, with 65 men, all Americans and Irish, under the command of Capt. Edward Macatter, of Boston. This cutter will be called the 'Black Princess,' and is intended to cruise in company with the 'Black Prince.'" — *Coffyn to Franklin, July* 30, 1779.

[1] Or "Fearnaught." In both ways may it be seen in the manuscripts.

lading and the said Captain's report, her cargoe of flaxseed, &c., belonged to Merchants in Dublin. The 8th she came up with an English King's Cutter, but was obliged to leave her off, being close chaced by a frigate stretching out from the land, which forced her to leave the Brig. The 10th she was again close chased by the same frigate under English flagg. Little or no wind, at 2 P.M. Came under the Land at Estaples, hoisted French colours and fired signals of distress for the assistance of the Forts at 4 P.M., being within pistolshot of the Frigate which still kept up her English colours. The Fort of Beek fired on her; then the poor "Black Prince" stranded, and the frigate, in 2½ fathoms water, brought down her English colours, shewed French do., and sheered off. All the crew and materials are saved.

Torris was by no means utterly discouraged at this. 'It is not improbable that the "Black Prince" had cleared several times her own value before she was lost. He at once set about fitting out another, to bear the same name. "The same commission will do for Macatter, the captain," he writes to Franklin, "as the name is not to be changed." The luck of the old "Black Prince" followed the new, and she made a most successful cruise.

Franklin to Macatter.

PASSY, Augt. 2, 1780.

SIR, — I congratulate you on the success of your late cruise. I see by the English newspapers that you have much alarmed the enemy's coasts and done great damage to their commerce. Your bringing in so many prisoners is another considerable service, and you may depend on having your generous intentions fulfilled in the exchange and deliverance of so many Americans. Therefore if the

British cartel ship is not gone, I wish they may be put on board her, a receipt being taken for them by the commissary, that they are sent on account of America, which receipt will be remitted to me. I have the honour to be, with much esteem for your activity and bravery, sir, &c., &c.

The cruises of these privateers gave rise to various questions, and disputes of some interest. Franklin's position in them was that of one ground betwixt two millstones. Both enemies and friends denounced the scheme. The English called the whole set pirates, and offered to hang them wherever they might be found. The French complained bitterly that these privateers with American commissions were not subject to the same rules and restrictions as were French privateers.

On the former point Torris writes to Franklin, on the 9th of August, 1779:—

"I do myself the honour to write you the great uneasiness I am under for the fate of the poor 21 men of her crew [the 'Blk. Prince's'], taken the 22^{d} June of Morlaix by the Quebec Frigate, on board of her 6 prizes, and who were landed in Guernsey. Your Excellency has had their names; several are born Americans, others Irish; but they are all sworn subjects to the United States. I read in the Kentish 'Gazette' that these people were sent to Penzance, to be there tried by the high courts of Admiralty for Piracy, because they were Irishmen, or subjects to great Britain. Messrs. Jn^{o} and Tho^{s} Kirwan, of London, to whom I send a ransom bill for recovery, a Prize to this American privateer, answered me that the 'Black Prince' is looked upon there as a Pirate ship, because she is manned with their own subjects."

With Vergennes and Sartine Franklin had several discussions on different points suggested by these privateers. The reader of the following letter will remember that it was at just this time that Katharine of Russia had propounded the principles of the First Armed Neutrality, of which the chief was that "free ships make free goods," and that France and Spain, as well as various other European nations, had concurred therein.

Franklin to Vergennes.

PASSY, June 18, 1780.

SIR, — I received the letter your excellency did me the honour of writing to me the 17 of this month, together with the letters inclos'd, of Mr. de Sartine and of the Ambassador of Holland, concerning the ship "Flora," which had been brought into Cherbourg by the "Black Prince," privateer. Your excellency will see by the enclosed paper that I had already given orders for the release of the vessel with payment of damages, before M. the Ambassador's complaint was made. And by my letter to the owners may be seen what my sentiments are with regard to the principle about to be established by neutral powers. This single cargo I nevertheless condemn'd to the use of the captors, excepting what should be reclaim'd on oath by the subjects of Holland. My reasons for doing so were, —

1. Because the law has been settled in America that enemy's property, found in neutral ships, might be taken out of the same, paying the freight that would have been due if the ships had compleated their voyages, together with all costs and damages. Of this there has been already several instances; and foreign owners have been so well satisfy'd with the handsome treatment their ships met with,

when carried into our ports on such occasions, that I never heard of any complaint.

2. Because the English have always condemn'd and confiscated American property found in such ships, of which there have been, as I am inform'd, many instances in America; and neither the Dutch captains or owners have ever complain'd of this as a violation of the flag of their nation, nor claim'd its right of protecting our goods in their ships, but have deliver'd them up to the English on receiving their freight.

3. Because a treaty has long since been offered in behalf of the United States to Holland, in which there was an article that free ships should make free goods; but no notice has been taken of that offer. And it was understood that, till such a treaty was entered into, the old law of nations took place, by which the property of an enemy was deem'd a good prize wherever found. And this vessel, charg'd with English property, being brought in, on the captain's voluntary declaration that it was such, before the intention of the Neutral Powers to change that law could be known, it was thought that the captors' right to the cargo could not fairly be refused.

I hope these reasons and the orders I have given will be satisfactory to his excellency the Ambassador of their High Mightinesses, whom I highly esteem and respect. I am perfectly convinc'd of the wisdom of your excellency's reflections on the subject; and you will always find me pursuing a conduct conformable to those just sentiments.

With regard to the observation of Mr. de Sartine on the "inconveniences resulting from American privateers fitted out as the 'Black Prince' is by Frenchmen, and yet not subject to the same forms and laws with your privateers," I beg leave to observe that, by the express words of the Commission granted to them, they are directed to submit

the prizes they shall carry into any port in the dominions of a Foreign State to the judgement of the Admiralty Courts established in such ports or states, and according to the usages there in force. Several of our first prizes brought into France were, if I mistake not, so judged; and it was not upon any request of mine that such causes were afterwards referred to me, nor am I desirous of continuing to exercise that jurisdiction. If, therefore, the judgement I have given in the case of the "Flora" is not approved, and the Council of Prizes will take the trouble of re-examining and trying that cause, and those of all other prizes to be brought in hereafter by American cruisers, it will be very agreeable to me, and from the very terms above mentioned of the commission, I think it will also be agreeable to Congress. Nor do I desire to encourage the fitting out of privateers in France by the King's subjects with American commissions. I have had many applications of the kind which I have refused, advising the owners to apply for the commissions of his Majesty. The case of the "Black Prince" was particular. She had been an old smuggler on the coasts of England and Ireland, was taken as such, and carried into Dublin; where her crew found means to break prison, cut their vessel out of the harbour, and escaped with her to Dunkerque. It was represented to me that the people, being all English and Irish, were afraid to continue their smuggling business, least, if they should be again taken, they might be punished as British subjects for their crime at Dublin; and that they were willing to go privateering against the English; but speaking no other language, they imagined they might, if taken, better pass as Americans, if they had an American commission, than as Frenchmen, if under a French commission. On these grounds I was applied to for a commission, which I granted, believing that such

a swift vessel, with a crew that know so well all the ports of the enemy's coasts, might greatly molest their coasting trade. Her first success occasioned adding the "Black Princess," by the same owners; and between them they have taken and sent in, or ransom'd, or destroy'd, an amazing number of vessels, I think near 80. But I shall continue to refuse granting any more commissions, except to American vessels; and if, under the circumstances above represented, it is thought, nevertheless, inconvenient that the commissions of the "Black Prince" and "Princess" should continue, I will immediately recall them.

CHAPTER XVII.

CAPTAIN LANDAIS.

Franklin to the Navy Board for the Eastern Department.

PASSY, 15 Mar. 1780.

GENTLEMEN, — I acquainted you in a former letter that there were great misunderstandings between Capt. Landais and the other officers of his ship. These differences arose to such a height, that the Captain once wrote me he would quit the command rather than continue with them. Some of them leaving the ship, that disturbance seem'd to be quieted. But there has since arisen another violent quarrel between him and Captain Jones. These things give me great trouble, particularly the latter, the circumstances of which I am under a necessity of communicating to you, that measures may be taken for putting properly an end to it by a Court Martial, if you find that step necessary.

Soon after the arrival of our little squadron in the Texel, I had a letter from Commander Jones, complaining highly of Capt. Landais, and mentioning that he was advised to put him under arrest in order to take his trial by a Court Martial, for which, however, there was not a sufficient number of officers in Europe, but he would do nothing in it till he heard from me. I had another from Captain Landais complaining of Commodore Jones, and begging me to order an inquiry into the matter as soon

as possible. I received also a letter from the Minister of Marine, of which the following is an extract, viz. : —

"I am persuaded, Sir, that you are not less moved than I am by the great number of the killed and wounded of the French volunteers on board the "Bon Homme Richard" in her combat with the English ship, the "Serapis." This occurrence is the more grievous, in that it appears that, if the American frigate, the "Alliance," had seconded the "Bon Homme Richard," in giving battle at the same time, the advantage gained by Commodore Jones would have been more prompt, would have cost less men, and would not have put the "Bon Homme Richard" into such a state as to sink about thirty-six hours after the battle. The captain of this frigate, having conducted himself in this extraordinary manner, I do not doubt, Sir, that you will command him to repair hither to give an account of himself; and in case you shall discover that it was owing to him that the victory was so costly, I doubt not that you will consider it proper to inform Congress of it, that it may remove this captain from its naval list."

Upon this, and with the advice of a very respectable friend of Capt. Landais, M. de Chaumont, who thought sending for him to come to Paris in order to an enquiry into his conduct would prevent many inconveniences to the service that might attend a more public discussion, I wrote to him, Oct. 15, acquainting him with the principal charges against him, and directing him to render himself here, bringing with him such papers and testimonies as he might think useful in his justification. I wrote at the same time to Comm'e Jones to send up such proofs as he might have in support of the charges against the Captain, that I might be enabled to give a just account of the affair to Congress. In two or three weeks Capt. Landais came to Paris, but I received no answer from Com'e

Jones. After waiting some days, I concluded to hear Capt. Landais on the 15 of November without longer delay; and that the impartiality of the enquiry might be more clear, I requested the above-named, a friend of Capt. Landais, and Dr. Bancroft, a friend of Comm'e Jones, to be present.

With this I send the minutes that were taken on that occasion.[1]

The justification Capt. Landais offers in answer to the charge of disobedience of the Commodore's orders, seems to call upon me for an explanation of what relates to those I had given Capt. Landais. The armament was made at l'Orient; M. de Chaumont was present there and had the care of it. I was necessarily at a great distance, and could not be consulted on every occasion, and I was not on the following: A convoy being wanted for some merchant ships to Bordeaux, and our squadron being ready, and there being time sufficient, it was employ'd in and performed that occasional service. The "Alliance" and "Bonhomme Richard" afterwards, at sea, ran foul of each other in the night, and all return'd to l'Orient. The state of the crew, as well as that of the ship, making it at first doubtful whether the "Bonhomme Richard" might not be long detained in port, I was apply'd to for the conditional order I gave on the 28th of July to Capt. Landais. I could not foresee that he would think a cruise, for which he was to take on board six months provisions, and during which he was to be under the orders of Comm'e Jones, was accomplished by the little trip to Bordeaux and the return above mention'd, and that he was therefore no longer under those orders. Nor could I imagine that a conditional order for cruising alone, in case the "Bonhomme" could not be

[1] This is, unfortunately, lost.

ready in time, would, if she was ready, and they sail'd together, be construed into an exemption from that subordination, in a squadron, which regular discipline and the good of the service requires; otherwise, I should certainly have removed those misapprehensions by fresh and very explicit orders. How far Capt. Landais is justifiable in these interpretations and his consequent conduct, must be left to his proper judges.

The absence of Commodore Jones and of all the witnesses (so that none of them could be cross-examined) have made this inquiry very imperfect. You will perceive that contradictions appear in the evidence on both sides in some very material points. These, with my ignorance in the manœuvring of ships engag'd and their possible operations under sail, the variety of circumstances that wind, tide, and the situation afford, make it as impracticable for me to form, as it would be improper for me without authority to give, a judgement in this affair. I will only take the liberty of saying in favour of Capt. Landais that, notwithstanding the mortal quarrel rose between them at sea, it does not appear to me at all probable that he fired into the "Bonhomme Richard" with design to kill Capt. Jones. The enquiry, tho' imperfect, and the length of it, have, however, had one good effect, in preventing hitherto a duel between the parties, that would have given much scandal; and which I believe will now not take place, as both expect justice from a court martial in America.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, &c..

It will be seen from this letter that, of all the trouble which Franklin had received from the various sea-captains of the United States Navy, that brought on him by Pierre Landais outweighed all the rest. Indeed, Captains

Wickes, Conyngham, and Jones, although they occasioned some annoyance to Franklin, did so in the most innocent manner imaginable, each one of them having for the Doctor very great reverence, esteem, and affection. With Landais it was different. He was of a different disposition in many ways. He was no countryman of Franklin's. He was a tremendous stickler for his own honor and his own rights. "I find him," wrote Franklin to Jones, of Landais, "so exceedingly captious and critical, and so apt to misconstrue as an intended injustice every expression in our language he does not immediately understand, that I am tired of writing anything for him or about him, and am determined to have nothing further to do with him."

And this affair was particularly vexatious. Franklin's sympathies would have led him to side with Jones, and this perhaps had the effect of rendering him too lenient with Landais. At least, it gave a very troublesome turn to the whole business. It is difficult now to come to a judgment. Unquestionably, Landais was to blame. The question seems to be just how far was he in the wrong? And this probably can never be settled with absolute certainty. At all events, the matter was not settled in the winter of 1779-80. Landais remained in Paris, doing we know not what. On the 10th of February he wrote to Franklin as follows: —

Please your Excellency, — I have been, ever since January 15th, waiting for the favour of your answer to the letter I had the honour to send you the same day; and for the copy of the letter from Monsieur de Sartine to you,[1] in consequence of which you ordered me to come to Paris, which you was so obliging to tell me you would send me,

[1] From which was quoted the passage on p. 320.

as I do want it for to write my justification to that minister. I beg if you would send it, with your order to stay in Paris till the time you'll procure me a proper passage to go to America, while the frigate "Alliance" will be there, for to be tryed by a Court-martial, being the only judges that I can have on such occasion.

I have been detained here for nothing, I find, these three months past. When I came from Holland I expected some justice should be done, and I should be sent back (with the deserved glory of having, by my conduct in the engagement of the 23^{d} Sep. last, not only prevented the "Bon Homme Richard" of being taken by the "Serapis," but also reduced and made strike the last ship, &c.,) to take the command again of the "Alliance," and that the malignant should be punished for his having calomniated me; but it has been quite the contrary. To what is it owed to? The command of the frigate has been took from me; and when I parted from Texel for Paris, according to your order, I brought with me only the necessary papers for my justification, and few clothes; and left on board the frigate four trunks, containing my clothes, linen, bed, books, sea-charts, maps, mathematics, optics, astronomics-instruments, all the Ships papers, my own private papers and great many plans, as I must go as soon as possible for to crave justice; and since I cannot go there without the most necessary of those things, I hope you will procure me with the money necessary to buy them, having been deprived of those I had in following your order. Beside, I want some money, as I told you the last time, for my dayly expenses. I beg as a favour you would send me the answer by the bearer.

I am with respect,

Your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

P. LANDAIS.

To this epistle Franklin sent the following reply: —

Passy, Feb. 12, 1780.

Sir, — You are pleased to blame me for your long stay in Paris. I have not heard of any opportunity you have had of going to America; and if you had been there, you must have waited as long for the arrival of the "Alliance" before you could have had the courtmartial you desire. There seems, then, to have been no time lost.

When you desired me formerly to order your things to be taken out of the "Alliance," I answered that if you chose to have them taken out, it was proper for you to give such orders, and appoint some friend in Holland to receive and take care of them for you. The ship lay there a long time after. I now acquaint you that she is probably at L'Orient, where you may take the same step if you approve of it.

You received money for your expences to Paris from Mr. Neufville. You have since had a considerable sum for your expenses here of M. de Chaumont, and will undoubtedly receive more if necessary for that purpose; but as to furnishing you with money to buy things you say you have lost, and which you might have had and may probably still have for asking, I do not see the necessity or the reasonableness of it.

If you call on Monday morning for the remaining papers, and bring with you those I have already certified, that I may have them all tacked together under one seal, you will then be possessed of the whole you ask.

I am, sir, &c.,

Benjamin Franklin.

Just what was done does not appear, — probably nothing; for about a month later the following exchange of notes took place: —

Landais to Franklin.

PARIS, March 11, 1780.

PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY, — You called me by your order from the command of the American Frigate "Alliance," which the Honorable Congress had confided the command of to me, upon some accusations that none but a Court-martial can judge, and you have given the said command to my accuser. You have kept me here these four months past, I don't know what for. As it could be said in America 't is my fault if I had not the same command again by not having not askt it should be given me back, may be that it was offered to me. I therefore beg as a right, your Excellency, give me the command of the "Alliance" again, or give me your refusal of doing it in writing from your hand, that I may have it to show to Congress. I know the Officers and crew of the "Alliance" wishes for me, and hate their present unlawful Commander.

I beg as a favour you 'll be so good to send me a positive and clear answer upon the subject.

Franklin to Landais.

PASSY, March 12, 1780.

SIR, — I received this day the two letters you did me the honour of writing to me, dated the 10th and 11th instant.

Having already twice answered very clearly and explicitly your demand about your things, it seems unnecessary to say anything farther on that head. I have written long since to Capt. Jones to deliver them to any person you may authorize to demand and receive them. If you please, you may give that authority to the agent you mention. I have also already often answered your demand of my procuring for you a passage to America.

M. de Chaumont, having had the payment of all expences in equipping the squadron, will, I suppose, have the payment of the prize money. None of it will pass thro' my hands.

After the continual quarrels between you and the people of the "Alliance" from the time of your taking command of her at Boston; after the repeated written complaints made to me of the officers, and by the officers of you, during all the time from your arrival in Europe to your departure on your last cruise; after having acquainted me in writing with your resolution not to continue in the command with such officers, and expressing the same disposition in discourse to Mr. Chaumont; after being, as you say, 4 months in Paris, in all which time you never gave the least intimation of a wish to return to her, nor desired anything of me relating to her but to have your things out of her, — it is really surprising to be now told that the officers and crew like you for their Captain, and that they hate their present commander, — of whom, however, they have not made to me the slightest complaint, — and to have now, for the first time, a demand from you of being replac'd in that ship, made only when you know she is just on the point of sailing. The demand, however, may perhaps be made chiefly for the sake of obtaining a refusal, of which you seem more earnestly desirous, as the having it to produce may be of service to you in America. I will not, therefore, deny it to you, and it shall be as positive and clear as you require it. No one has ever learnt from me the opinion I formed of you from the enquiry made into your conduct. I kept it entirely to myself. I have not even hinted it in my letters to America, because I would not hazard giving any one a bias to your prejudice. By communicating a part of that opinion privately to you it can do you no harm, for you may burn it. I should not

give you the pain of reading it if your demand did not make it necessary. I think you, then, so imprudent, so litigious, and quarrelsome a man, even with your best friends, that peace and good order, and consequently the quiet and regular subordination so necessary to success, are, where you preside, impossible. These are matters within my observation and comprehension; your military operations I leave to more capable judges. If, therefore, I had 20 ships-of-war in my disposition, I should not give one of them to Captain Landais. The same temper which excluded him from the French Marine would weigh equally with me. Of course I shall not replace him in the "Alliance."

I am assur'd, however, that as captain of a merchantship you have two very good qualities, highly useful to your owners, viz., economy and integrity. For these I esteem you, and have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

P. S. I have passed over all the charges made or insinuated against me in your letters and angry conversations, because I would avoid continuing an altercation for which I have neither time nor inclination. You will carry them to America, where I must be accountable for my conduct towards you, and where it will be my duty, if I cannot justify myself, to submit to any censures I may have merited. Our correspondence, which cannot be pleasant to either of us, may therefore, if you please, end here.

On receipt of this sufficiently explicit letter, Landais went down to L'Orient to take command of the "Alliance." We have not much evidence as to what he did there. We may imagine, however, that by this time Landais had got very well acquainted with another man of much the same

stamp as himself, — Mr. Arthur Lee, — who was at this time at L'Orient, waiting for a chance to sail for America, where he was anxious, among other duties, to give the value of his own personal presence to the furtherance of his attacks on Franklin and others. In Landais he undoubtedly thought he saw a man most unjustly treated, and at once went to work to help him.[1] This, however, we can only surmise from various expressions in letters written at about this time, some of which will come in later. However this may be, Landais was at L'Orient for about two months, when he again wrote to Franklin : —

May it please your Excellency, — I have been waiting ever since I came to L'Orient for your order to me to retake command of the Frigate "Alliance," thinking you would have reflected how she was taken from me.

I should look upon myself culpable to remain a tame spectator, while my authority on board her is usurped by another. Since I have been placed to that command by a resolve of the Honble Congress, it appears to me upon consideration that nothing can authorize your Ex. to this proceeding of displacing me. I am persuaded that even the Congress themselves would never pretend to exercise a power so arbitrary as to overthrow their officers without trial, were their reasons ever so well founded, much less on a parcel of scandalous charges intended to cover the ignorance and misbehavior of a man who would freely sacrifice the reputation of the officers and men of a whole fleet to establish himself.

I consider it my duty to return to my station on board her. I know of nothing that I have done that can justify

[1] That this view was not extraordinary one may see from reading the opinion delivered by John Adams, printed a few pages later, from which we must recognize that there was some sense in Landais's position, though the method of pressing his claim was not the best one.

your detaining me from this. I am responsible to them that intrusted the ship to my charge to return her to them again. If you have any express authority for depriving me of my command, I must beg a copy of it, and I will pay due obedience to it; otherwise I must consider myself as Capt. of the ship, and I beg that Dr. Franklin will not encourage anybody to interfere with me in my duty, but give me all the assistance in his power. It appears, moreover, that I am considered as Capn of the "Alliance" by the Admiralty office of the United States, by the letter I have the honour to enclose your Excellency a copy. I must beg a speedy answer to this; and if your Ex^{cy} is still determined to withhold me from my station, you must be answerable for any disagreeable consequences that may take place, which I should wish to avoid.

I am, &c.,

P. LANDAIS.

L'ORIENT, May 29, 1780.

Franklin answered as follows: —

PASSY, June 7, 1780.

SIR, — I received yours of the 29th past, and after the manner in which you quitted the ship, my clear and positive refusal of replacing you contained in mine of March the 12th, and my furnishing you with a considerable sum to enable you to go to America for a trial, I am surprised to find you at L'Orient, when I thought you had long since been on your voyage; and to be told that "you had been waiting ever since your arrival for my orders to retake the command of the 'Alliance,'" when I had never heard of your being there, or given you the least expectation of the kind. The whole affair between us will be laid before our superiors, who will judge justly of the consistency and propriety of your conduct and of mine. I waive, therefore, any farther dispute with you. But I charge you not to

meddle with the "Alliance" or create any disturbance on board her, as you will answer the contrary at your peril.

I am, Sir, Yours, &c.,

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Franklin also wrote to Paul Jones, who was at that time on board the "Alliance" at L'Orient: —

PASSY, June 12, 1780.

DEAR SIR, — Saturday morning last I received a letter, signed by about 115 of the sailors of the "Alliance," declaring that they would not raise the anchor nor depart from L'Orient till they had six months' wages paid them and the utmost farthing of their prize money, including the ships sent into Norway, and until *their legal captain, P. Landais* is restored to them, — or to that effect, for I have not the letter before me. This mutiny has undoubtedly been excited by that captain, probably by making them believe that satisfaction has been received for those Norway prizes deliver'd up to the English, which God knows is not true, the Court of Denmark not having yet resolved to give us a shilling on that account. That he is concern'd in this mutiny he has been foolish enough to furnish us with proofs, — the sailors' letter being not only enclosed under a cover directed to me in his handwriting, but he has also in the same writing interlin'd the words, *their legal captain, P. Landais,* which happen to contain his signature. I went immediately to Versailles to demand the assistance of Government; and on showing the letter, by which his guilt plainly appear'd, an order was immediately granted and sent away the same evening for apprehending and imprisoning him; and orders were promis'd to be given at the same time to the Commissary of the Port to afford you all kind of assistance to facilitate your depart. M. de Chaumont being with me, and assisting

warmly in obtaining these orders, we thought it best at the same time to give directions that those sailors who have signed his letter should not be favour'd with receiving any part of the money order'd to be advanced in part of what it is supposed the "Serapis" and "Countis" may be sold for, unless to such as express their sorrow for having been so misled and willingness to do their duty. And that they may be known, their letter was sent down to M. de Montplaisir; but care should be taken that it be return'd, as it contains the proofs above mentioned against Landais, who will probably be try'd for his life, being considered by the Ministers as an emigrant without the King's permission, and therefore still a Frenchman, and when found in France still subject to its laws. When that advance was ordered, it was suppos'd the vessels might have been got away without waiting for the sale, and that the people who had a right to share them, receiving this in part to relieve their present necessities, might have appointed some agent to receive and remit the rest to them in America; but the delays have been so great that the time of sale now approaches, and perhaps the produce may be known before you can be ready to depart with the "Ariel," and if ready money is paid, the division may be made at once. If any unforseen difficulties should arise to prevent this, I see no other way but to separate those who cannot trust to their Country to do them justice, and put them on shore, and let them wait for their shares at their own expense; for 't is unreasonable to keep the ship here at so monstrous an expense to the public for their private advantage or humors. As to wages, I have no authority or means of paying wages here, and I believe that all maritime states pay their ships at home; for it cannot be supposed that pay-offices are to be kept in every part of the world to which ships may happen to go; besides it cannot be known here what their

families or attorneys have received for them. I see you are likely to have a great deal of trouble. It requires prudence. I wish you well thro' it. You have shown your abilities in fighting. You have now an opportunity of showing the other necessary part in the character of a great chief, — your abilities in governing. Adieu.

Yours sincerely,

B. F.

Landais to Franklin.

Please your Excellency, — I wrote you a letter of the 29th May and duplicates, and have received no answer. I beg'd your Excellency would inform me by what authority I was kept from my ship. I enclosed a copy of a letter from the Secretary of the Hon^ble^ Navy Board, Philadelphia, the purport of which was, to take in a few goods for his use, as the ship was ordered home by Congress. My officers and crew inform me they have also wrote to your Excellency, begging that their lawful commander might be restored to them again, as they knew of no other commander but me. They inform me that no answer has come to their hands.

I have also, with the advice of the principal Americans and the desire of my officers and crew, taken the command yesterday, as was my right, and am determined to keep her and carry her to America, as required by Congress in the letter from the Secretary of the Hon^ble^ Navy Board that I enclose to you. I therefore beg you will have the officers and crew paid their prize money and send me your despatches, that I may fulfil the orders of Congress. On my going on board my officers and men received me very cheerfully, and acknowledged me to be their lawful commander, and no other till they see a resolve of Congress for another captain.

I am ready to sail whenever you will be pleased to pay my people and send me your despatches.

L'Orient, 14 June, 1780.

The enclosed letter from John Brown, Secretary, is directed to Landais as Captain of the "Alliance," and says: "The Board of Admiralty of the U. S. having given orders that the Continental Frigate "Alliance" should return to this port," — and goes on to ask Landais to bring with him when he sails certain freight. It was written some time before this.

On receipt of this Franklin at once wrote these two letters: —

Versailles, June 16, 1780.

Captain Landais:

Sir, — I am much surprised to learn that you have, contrary to the express orders contained in mine of the 7th instant, taken on yourself the command of the frigate. I do hereby repeat those orders, and charge you to quit the ship immediately.

I am, sir, yours, &c.,

Benjamin Franklin.

Versailles, June 16, 1780.

To the Officers and Seamen of the "Alliance" Frigate:

Gentlemen, — Having judg'd fit for the service of the United States to appoint Comme Jones to the command of the "Alliance" in her present intended voyage to America, I hereby direct you to obey him as your captain, till farther orders shall be given by the honourable Congress.

I am, gentlemen,

Your friend and humble servant,

Benjamin Franklin,

Min. Plen. for the U. S.

This performance of Landais was a master-stroke on his part, and his enemies were confounded at it. They at once wrote to Franklin. "I think it my duty as an American citizen," says Jonathan Nesbit, "to give you my opinion on this affair, — which is that Landais has been instigated to take the present measure by some designing person, (an enemy to his country) whose design it is to throw everything into confusion, and to prevent if possible the supply now going to America from getting there in due time." And he goes on to ask pardon for intruding his own private affairs upon Franklin, and to say, that if Landais is continued in command of the "Alliance," he shall not believe it safe for the "Lucerne," under his care, to go under her convoy. Francis Wharton also wrote, pointing out Lee as the enemy to his country, in much clearer language. Paul Jones also wrote as follows: —

L'Orient, June 13th, 1780.

Sir, — On my arrival here[1] I found that Captain Landais, encouraged, as I believe, by Mr. Lee and Mr. Gillan, had raised a party spirit on board the "Alliance." I have been, however, a considerable part of the time since my return, and have always been well received and duly obeyed. As I found that my commission and authority had been called in question, I had a copy of my commission as well as your orders read on board yesterday for the satisfaction of every Person; and I soon afterwards discovered that Captain Landais had written the within letter to lieutenant Degge, which he had read to the crew, and which I communicated last night to the Commandant. This day I came ashore in the forenoon to make some necessary arrangements with the Command-

[1] He had been to Versailles.

ant, respecting the despatch of the "Ariel." In my absence from the "Alliance," Captain Landais went on board, declaring that he came to take command of the ship, and was determined to support himself by force against any person who would dispute his authority. I thought it the most prudent method to make the within written application to the Commandant of the Marine, who, with the Commandant of the Road, advises me to send an account of the matter to your Excellency by express, and to wait your orders in consequence, in concurrence with the orders of Government.

Several of the brave officers who served with me in the "Bon Homme Richard" have already been treated with indignity on board, and my first lieutenant, Mr. Dale, this moment tells me that himself and some others have been turned ashore. Before I came ashore this forenoon, the crew being assembled, I demanded whether any one of them could say a word to my disadvantage. They answered they could not. There was then every appearance of general contentment and subordination. I am certain the people in general love and would readily obey me. . . .

My conduct of the affair will, I hope, meet with your Excellency's approbation. I have strictly followed the advice I have received from the two commandants here. I have communicated to them the verbal orders you gave me at parting to ask their assistance in case it should be wanted; but they cannot, they say, act without written orders from you in concurrence with the court.

I have the honour, &c.

Franklin at once took steps in the matter. He applied to the French government for orders to stop Landais at L'Orient by force if necessary. Jones too came to Versailles to press the application, — and rather unadvisedly

perhaps; for in the state in which affairs then stood, possession was nine points of the law; and Landais having possession of the ship, proceeded to get the "Alliance" to rights as soon as possible, and to have her towed out into the road, that she might set sail at any moment. Here he was checked by the orders of the commander of the French fort, under whose guns he lay, which were at this moment to blow the "Alliance" out of the water if she should attempt to set sail. This, however, was a day or two later. Jones, who had hurried to Versailles, had by this time returned to L'Orient, and busied himself to prevent any such catastrophe. Landais, however, was firm. He was the rightful commander, he said, he waited only for his prize money, and then he would set sail for America. Arthur Lee proffered his advice to Jones, who was on shore, — "though I," remarked Jones, "had never even hinted that his opinion or advice would be accepted. He has, however, pulled off the masque, and I am convinced is not a little disappointed that his operations here have not produced bloodshed between the subjects of France and America, — poor man."

Franklin says, in writing to Wharton about Landais, "I have no doubt but your suspicion of his adviser is well founded. That genius must either find or make a quarrel wherever he is. The only excuse for him that his conduct will admit of, is his being at times out of his senses. This I always allow, and am persuaded that if some of the many enemies he provokes do not kill him sooner, he will die in a mad-house. As to Capt. Landais, I have no other powers relating to the "Alliance" than what are imply'd in my Ministerial office. He was instructed strictly by the admiralty in America to obey my orders. He disobeyed them. It is not necessary to discuss these matters here. We are accountable at home. I am heart-

ily sorry that you have been so long detained. I have done everything in my power to prevent it. You can have no conception of the vexation these maritime affairs occasion me. It is hard that I who give others no trouble with my quarrels, should be plagued with all the perversities of those who think fit to wrangle with one another. I wish you a good voyage at last, and that I could mend your company.

Adieu. I am ever,

Y. aff., B. F.

The matter had by this time about come to an end. A few days after Franklin writes to Jones: —

PASSY, June 27, 1780.
6 P.M.

DEAR SIR, — I have this minute received yours of the 23rd. The letter you mention having sent me by the last post, inclosing the necessary papers to explain circumstances, is not come to hand, so that I am much in the dark about your present situation. I only learn by other means that the "Alliance" is gone out of port, and that you are not likely to recover, and have relinquish'd the command of her; so that affair is over. And the business is now to get the goods out as well as we can. I am perfectly bewildered with the different schemes that have been proposed to me for this purpose by Mr. Williams, Mr. Ross, yourself, and Mr. de Chaumont. Mr. Williams was for purchasing ships. I told him I had not the money; but he still urges it. You and Mr. Ross proposed borrowing the "Ariel." I joined in the application for that ship. We obtained her. She was to carry all that the "Alliance" could not take. Now you find her insufficient. An additional ship has already been asked, and could not be obtained. I think, therefore, it will be best that you

take as much in the "Ariel" as you can, and depart with it. For the rest I must apply to the government to contrive some means of transporting it in their own ships. This is my present opinion. And when I have once got rid of this business, no consideration shall tempt me to meddle again with such matters.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

And a few days afterward the "Alliance," Captain Landais, sails for America with this parting shot: —

"ALLIANCE" AT GROA, 7th July, 1780.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY, — I have waited till now for your order for sailing as you announced me another letter, in yours of the 24th June, to come by the next post; but since you have wrote me nothing, and that you charged me in that letter with the prejudicial delay of the sailing of the "Alliance," and given no hopes of having my people righted, I have prevayled upon them to go to our own country to seek justice.

I have for my own part been treated very ill, and my purser has been put into prison, but I hope we will have satisfaction for the injuries, and I now acquaint you that I am getting under sail to go to America.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

P. LANDAIS, *Captain of the "Alliance."*

On the voyage home, as is well known, the erratic captain showed such signs of insanity that his officers disarmed him, and brought him home in confinement thus justifying Franklin's constant opinion as to his unbalanced intellect. And it may be proper to close the account of the episode with the calm views of John Adams on the matter.

June 26, '80.

I have read over all the Papers in the bundle left with me, numbered to thirty-seven. I have also read the three queries stated to me.

These queries I apprehend can legally be answered by Congress or a Court martial, and therefore it would be improper in me to give any answer to them, because the papers will appear before Congress or a Court martial, who can judge of them better than I. They will also hear Captain Landais, which I cannot do. My opinion therefore would have no weight either before the one or the other tribunal. Or, supposing it to be admitted to be read and to have any weight, it ought not to be given, because I cannot be legally either a witness or a judge.

I cannot, however, think that the instructions of the Navy Board to Captain Landais to obey the orders of the Minister plenipotentiary, contain authority to remove him, without his consent, from the command of a ship committed to him by Congress, because the Navy Board themselves had not as I apprehend such authority. Since those instructions were given, as I was informed at Boston, Congress have given to the Navy Board power, upon any misbehavior of an officer, to suspend him, stating to Congress at the same time a regular charge against him. But I do not find among these papers such authority given to anybody in Europe, nor do I find that any regular charge against Captain Landais has ever been stated to Congress.

There has seldom if ever been in France a sufficient number of officers at a time to constitute a courtmartial, and our code of admiralty laws is so inadequate to the government of frigates for any time in Europe, that it is presumed Congress in future will either omit to put frigates under any direction in Europe, or make some

addition to the laws of the admiralty adapted to such cases; for there is an end of all order, discipline, and decency, when disputes arise and there is no Tribunal to decide them, and when crimes are committed or alledged and there is no authority to try or punish them.

I have not observed among these papers any clear evidence of Captain Landais consent to leave the command of the ship; and therefore, upon the whole, rather than bring the present disputes about the "Alliance" to any critical and dangerous decision here, where the Law is so much at a loose, and there can be no legal Tribunal to decide, I should think your Excellency would be most likely to be justified in pursuing the mildest measures, by transmitting all the papers and evidence to Congress or the Navy Board for a trial by a Court Martial, and ordering the commanding officer of the "Alliance" with the Stores and Convoy as soon as possible to America.

I give this opinion to your Excellency to make what use of it you think proper.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, sir, your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

PARIS, June 26, 1780.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE AMERICAN PRISONERS.

"I SEE by your newspapers," writes Franklin to Hartley during the summer of 1779, "that Capt. Cunningham, one of our cruisers, is at length taken and carried prisoner into England, where it is proposed to try him as a pirate, on the pretence that he had no commission. As I am well acquainted with the fact, I can assure you that he really had a Congress commission. And I cannot believe that mere resentment, occasioned by this uncommon success, will attempt to sacrifice a brave man, who has always behaved as a generous enemy, — witness his treatment of his prisoners taken in the Harwich pacquet, and all afterwards that fell into his hands. I know I shall not offend you recommending him warmly to your protection."

This was, of course, the famous Captain Gustavus Conyngham of the cutter "Revenge," from Dunkirk, whose proceedings had made such a noise for a time the year before, as will be remembered. He had cruised about, through the fall and winter, capturing some prizes and sending them where he could until the spring, when he was captured by the enemy and carried into New York as prisoner. The word "pirate" was applied to him, as may be remembered, by no less authorities than King George III., and Lord North, and indeed by very many of the English at this time. The charge could not be sustained against him, any better than could the charge of treason

be maintained against all American sailors taken in arms against the English. Captured in arms against the English ships of war, Paul Jones was also called a pirate. That Conyngham had a commission in his first cruise cannot be doubted, although he unfortunately lost it at Dunkirk when put into prison there. And as the Americans were *de facto* belligerents, their commissions necessarily relieved their captains from the charge of piracy. As to whether the lugger which took the Harwich packet and the "Revenge" are to be regarded as public men-of-war or as privateers, there is some doubt. We find, however, in the Stevens Collection, the following sketch of a letter to Captain Conyngham: —

[No date.]

Sir, — The interest which the public has in the vessel you command, makes us regard her as a continental ship of war. Mr. Hodge and Mr. Ross have therefore no right to direct or control you, neither had Mr. Deane alone any right to dispose of the prizes you made, as Mnsr. Lagonese informs us he has done. You will give us an account for the future of your plans and proceedings; and the individuals who may be concerned in her, — for we know not who they are, nor how far they have contributed, — will have their share when they prove their right.

There seems little doubt, however, that private persons were concerned in the fitting out, particularly Mr. Deane and Mr. Hodge who was put into the Bastile for it. But at the time of Deane's recall, it seemed to be an unsettled question as to whether the private persons who were concerned in the enterprise, and who expected to share in the profits to accrue from the sale of prizes, did or did not provide any of the funds for the fitting out of the vessels. These were matters which were dark even when contemporary, and time has pushed them farther into obscurity.

The question has little enough to do with Conyngham's position. Whether a naval officer or a privateersman, he had his Congress commission as his warrant, and probably was never in any serious danger of being tried for a pirate.

However this may be, Conyngham could hardly have been worse treated, had he sailed on no commission but his own sweet will and flung out the Jolly Roger, like Ned Teach of Bristol in former days, instead of the new American flag.

Franklin, on hearing of his imprisonment, at once wrote to Digges, as well as to his friend Hartley.

PASSY, Augt 20, 1779.

DEAR SIR, — I hear Capt. Cunningham is confined in England a prisoner. I desire you would take care to supply him with necessaries, that a brave man may not suffer for want of assistance in his distress. I ordered payment of your bill, but it has not yet appeared.

I am ever

Your affectionate B. F.

As the fall advanced, the news that Conyngham was taken became more widely known. Jonathan Nesbit and Franklin exchanged letters on the matter.

L'ORIENT, Sept. 22d, 1779.

SIR, — By the Brig "Retaliation," Capt. Kolloch, which left Philadelphia the 10th August, I have received letters informing me that Capt. G. Conyngham, late commander of the Cutter "Revenge," had the misfortune to be taken last spring by the "Galatea" and sent into New York, from whence he has been sent to England with a design to have him tryed for Piracy. They pretend to say that he took the Harwich Packet without having any commission, which

your excellency must know to be false, — as I believe you were in Paris at the time that his Commission and orders were delivered him. The Commission under which he acted as Captn of the "Revenge" is dated, I apprehend, after the taking of the Harwich packet.[1] It is on this circumstance, no doubt, that the charge of piracy is founded. His first commission was taken from him in Dunkirk after he was put in gaol, and sent up to Paris, and I think was lodged in the hands of Monsr le Comte de Vergennes. I have to request that your Excellency will do everything in your power to prevent this poor fellow from suffering. Considering the smallness of his vessel and the difficulty he labored under when he first left France, he has done a great deal for the service of his country. He has done so much harm to the enemy that he can expect no mercy at their hands, and if they can find any pretence whatever, they will certainly destroy him. Capt. Kolloch informs me that he was sent home in irons. I should certainly have heard from him was he not already confined. I once more take the liberty to recommend the unhappy man's case to your excellency's particular attention.

I have the honor to be wth great respect,

JONATHAN NESBIT.

To Mr. Nesbit.

PASSY, Sept. 29, 1779.

SIR, — Capt. Conyngham has not been neglected. As soon as I heard of his arrival in England, I wrote to a friend to furnish him with what money he might want, and to assure him that he had never acted without a commission. I have been made to understand in answer that there

[1] Nesbit is here wrong. The first commission was dated March 1, 1777, the second May 2 of the same year. The Harwich packet was taken on May 7. COOPER'S Naval History, i. 114, 115.

is no intention to prosecute him, and that he was accordingly removed from Pendennis Castle and put among the common prisoners at Plymouth, to take his turn for exchange. The Congress, hearing of the threats to sacrifice him, put 3 officers in close confinement to abide his fate, and acquainted Sir George Collier with their determination, who probably wrote to the British Ministers. I thank you for informing me what became of his first commission. I suppose I can now easily recover it, to produce on occasion. Probably the date of that taken with him, being posterior to his capture of the pacquet, made the enemy think they had an advantage against him. But when the English government have encouraged our sailors intrusted with our vessels to betray that trust, run away with the vessels, and bring them into English ports, giving such traitors the value as if good and lawful prizes, it was foolish imprudence in the English commodore to talk of hanging one of our captains for taking a prize without commission.

I have the honour to be, with great esteem, sir,

B. FRANKLIN.

So also did Thomas Wharton write to urge that something be done for Conyngham, and to him as well did Franklin write that the Captain's interests were being attended to. This was toward the end of September. October passed and nothing was heard from the prisoner, save occasional notice in letters from Hartley and Digges, until toward the middle of November, when Franklin began to hear rumors and accounts, which were soon confirmed by a letter from the worthy and gallant Captain himself.

AMSTERDAM, Nov. 18,th 1779.

DR SIR, — I have the pleasure to inform you that on the 3d instant, with about 50 of our unfortunate

countrymen, broke out of Mill prison. I brought 3 officers with me. I came by the way of London, it being the safest. At London we meet with our good friend Mr. Digges, who did everything in his power to serve me and all his countrymen that chance to fall in his way. Happy we to have such a man among that set of tyrants they have in that country. The treatment I have received is unparalleled. Irons, dungeons, hunger, the hangmans cart I have experienced. I shall set off from here the 19th for Dunkirk. There I shall be glad to hear from you. I shall always be ready to serve my country, and happy should I be to be able to come alongside some of those petty tyrants. I find something of the effects of my confinement. In a short time will be able to retaliate. I should at this time go out with Capt. Jones or in the squadron, could I have heard from you. I should be glad to go for the Continent if a good opportunity served. In this I shall take your advice, and act accordingly. The cash Mr. Digges supplied me with, and some necessaries I got at Plymouth the amt could not procure; the friend we have at Plymouth is obliged to act with the greatest caution. Mr. Redmond Conyngham, in Ireland, has ordered me some little supply through the hands of David Hartley of London, a mortel enemy of America by all accounts. From your most obet. and very humble servt.,

G. Conyngham.

Franklin to Capt. Conyngham.

Passy, Nov. 22, 1779.

Sir, — It gave me great pleasure to hear of your escape out of prison, which I first learnt from 6 of the men who broke out with you and came to France in a boat. I was then anxious lest you should be retaken, and I am very glad indeed to hear of your safe arrival at Amster-

dam. I think it will be best for you to stay awhile at Dunkirk, till we see what becomes of the little squadron from Holland, for which it is said the English are lying in wait with a superior force. The Congress resented exceedingly the inhuman treatment you met with, and it ordered three English officers to be confined in the same manner, to abide your fate.

There are some Frenchmen returned to Dunkirk who were put by you into one of your first prizes, which was afterwards carried into England. I wish you would adjust their claims of wages, prize money, &c., and put them in a way of getting what may be due to them.

I write to Mr. Coffyn by this post, to supply you with necessaries. You will be as frugal as possible, money being scarce with me, and the calls upon me abundant.

With great esteem I have, &c.

Capt. Conyngham to Franklin.

Texel Road, Decembr 1, 79.

Honourable Sir, — I wrote you last from Amsterdam. At that time informed of my going to Dunkirk; but meeting with Com^{d}. Jones prevented me, and supposing the "Alliance" will be ordered home as soon as she may get to France. The hurry I was obliged to leave England could not get my account with me. Mr. Digges was to send it to Dunkirk as soon as he could get it from Plymouth. I hope ere this you have a settlement from the Geoine of the prizes left in care of Mr. Lagoanese & Co. Should be glad to know the result in that quarter. The two west india men that was given up by the Court of France, they paying the captors. I must think we have an undoubted right to be paid for the packet and Brig of ——. The Brig had a valuable cargo. In reality they should [pay]

for the confinement we were under. I shall acquaint you of the many favours I received since I became a captive. 1st, in New York, that Sir George Collier ordered irons on my legs, with a centry on board the ship. Mr. Collier going on an expedition ordered me to jaole, there put me into the condemned room. The first night a cold plank my bed, a stone for a pillow. 2d night allowed a something to lay on; in this horrid room was kept for eight days without the least morsel of bread, or anything but water, from the keeper of the prison. After many notes, &c., sent to the jailer, at last he made his appearance. After expostulating of the impropriety of such treatment he told me *he had such orders*, but would take it upon himself to release me on my giving him my strongest assurances I would not make my escape. I readily consented, — it not being in the power of man to get out of the condemned room. By all accounts this [is] the first instance of this jailers humanity. A creature after Clinton's own heart. In the prison of New York I continued till that tyrant Collier returned. A stranger to his mode of war would be certain he was from Gambia, or that quarter. Then I was told to get ready to go on board the prison-ship, was moved to a separate apartment in the prison; then a pair of criminal irons put on my legs, weight 50 pounds; at the door, put into the hangman's cart, — all in form as if bound to the gallows. I was then put into a boat and took alongside of the "Raisonable" [and] then showed a paper, signed Commd. Jones, ordering me to be sent to England in the packet. In those Irons I was brought to Pendennis Castle. Then not contented, they manacled my hands with a new fashioned pair of ruffels fitted very tite. In this condition I was kept there 15 or 16 days, then brought to Plymouth and lodged in the black hole for eight days, before they would do me the honour of committing me on

suspicion of high treason on his majesties high seas; then put into Mill prison, where we committed treason through his earth and made our escape. This, Sir, is an account of their favors, insults excepted. I must acquaint your excellency that the poor unfortunate prisoners in Plymouth are in a most distressed situation. The donation, when I left that, had been at 6^{d} per week. I am afraid could they not be exchanged soon, will be obliged to enter in their service. They cannot live on the Government allowance. I hope to have the favour of a letter from you. I am, sir,

Your most obdt. Servt.,

G. Conyngham.

So much for the after-adventures of Conyngham. He remained with Jones for the winter and spring, but did not sail on the "Ariel" with that officer for America. Why he was not recognized in some manner, we cannot say. The latest note we have of him is that he was re-captured by his old enemies the next year.

By this time two exchanges had been made, making a few more than two hundred American prisoners released in this manner. As many more had probably been released in the summary manner made use of by Conyngham. There were perhaps five hundred left in prison. To exchange these, Franklin had only about a hundred prisoners at Brest and L'Orient. But he had paroles given by over two hundred English prisoners who had been released at sea, and he anticipated that a large number of English would be brought in by Paul Jones; and here he was not disappointed. The business continued through the winter, dragging on in a most unsatisfactory manner. Hartley was busy in Parliament, and could not give his time to the matter. So the later letters in the correspondence are

directed to Mr. William Hodgson, a London merchant who had before this time given great assistance to Franklin in this very matter.

To William Hodgson.

I send you enclosed copies of the engagements of a number of prisoners we have discharged at sea. The originals shall be sent when required. One of Commodore Jones's little squadron, which parted with him on the coast of Ireland, is returned, I hear, with a number of prizes and some hundreds of prisoners. If the Commodore himself gets safe into France with his prizes, there will be another very considerable number. I have not yet received the accounts I have wrote for from Spain, but expect them daily.

M. de Sartine seems disposed to grant a passport to the cartel for Morlaix, but desired me to make the proposition to him in writing, that he might lay it before the King. I did so a few days since, but have not received an answer.

With the highest esteem, I am ever, my dear friend,

B. F.

P. S. Oct. 10. We have just received advice of the safe arrival of Commodore Jones in the Texel, with 400 prisoners. If therefore the Board would send their cartels thither with an equal number, it would save a great deal of misery to your poor people, which their confinement in the ships till they can be lodged in French prisons must occasion.

To the Same.

Passy, Oct. 19, 1779.

Dear Sir, — Having just received the passport desired for the cartel to make use of the port of Morlaix, I take

this first oppertunity of sending it to you, in hopes of releasing by more expeditious voyages, the poor prisoners on both sides, before the severity of winter comes on. Besides those released on parole, we have no more English prisoners than you have American. On those releases we have relied, on the honour and humanity of the Board, and I am persuaded that we shall not find ourselves deceived. You will always find me ready in every step that may soften the rigours of war, to give the first demonstrations of that confidence which naturally opens by degrees the way to peace.

With great esteem and affection,

I am ever, dear sir, &c.

B. F.

To the Same.

Passy, Jan. 20, 1780.

Dear Sir, — I am much obliged by your kind letter, informing me of the good disposition of the Commissioners for the sick and wounded. I believe they would do all things what is humane, just, and honourable, but I have not so good an opinion of the Lords of the Admiralty, from whom Mr. Hartley had never been able to obtain a *yes* or *no* on the plain question, whether the written paroles or engagements of English prisoners set at liberty by our cruisers were to be comply'd with. By the resolution which you inform me is now taken, not to send any more men to Morlaix than there shall be assembled there to exchange them with, I perceive they have determined that such paroles are not to be regarded; I must therefore give notice to our people to trust no more to them, but to bring and lodge all their prisoners in French jails. How much human misery might be saved by continuing the other method. I thought confidence, if it had not begot confidence, would at last have produced justice; but I was

mistaken. The English navy has had the service of more than 200 seamen so released ever since May last. Had like confidence been placed in us, or even had those engagements been executed, I should have sent over directly from Holland in Dutch bottoms, without writing for a passport, the prisoners brought in by Commodore Jones, which exceeded 500, and without waiting for the agreement made a long time after between the French and English Embassadors for their exchange. It is surprising on how slight grounds Englishmen can think themselves disengaged from their paroles given to Americans. There is a Captain Tatnall who, with all his ship's company, was released at Boston, on his promise to obtain in England the release of a Capt. Robinson and his company, who were an equal number. On his arrival in England, he found Capt. Robinson already exchanged, and therefore, as Mr. Hartley informs me, judges himself quit of his engagement; and it seems we are then to have no men in exchange for those given for Capt. Robinson and his people. Probably we shall have none neither for those brought over upon British faith with two flags of truce from Boston. Comm. Jones released on their written paroles, they being in bad health, John Brownell, master's mate, and Samuel Wightman, Lieutenant of marines, both of the "Serapis," soon after their arrival in Holland. Their paroles with many others are in my hands. I have not yet been able to obtain an account of the prisoners we have in Spain. There are 48 at L'Orient, and 36 or 38 at Brest, which may all soon be rendered at Morlaix, if a cartel should arrive there. Inclosed I send a second pass for that place. I trouble you with it, as I apprehend that Mr. Hartley, who wrote for it, may be out of town. I am persuaded, too, that if you can procure any favourable change in the sentiments of their Lordships of the Admi-

ralty relating to parole prisoners, of which I should be glad to hear, it will be a pleasure to your benevolent mind.

I rejoice to learn the friends I esteemed and loved when in England continue well. Be pleased to remember me to them affectionately. With great esteem,

I am ever, dear sir, &c.

B. F.

To the Same.

Passy, Feb. 14, 1780.

Dear Sir, — I have this moment received your favour of Jany 28. I had written to you the 20th of the same month and enclosed a second pass for Morlaix. I hope to hear of its being come to hand, tho' it was not when you wrote. I have written also lately to Mr. Hartley and Mr. Digges on the subject of our prisoners. I shall give orders this day for the sending away in the English Cartel, the "Happy," now at L' Orient, 48 English prisoners, brought in there by the "Black Prince." If all our people are directly sent over, it may be depended on that an equal number of English shall be returned. Our agent at Morlaix is Mr. Pilot, merchant there. If I do not hear before next post that my letter to you came to hand I shall send a copy. I shall also send you a 100£ bill, to be disposed of in relieving the most distressed among our confined countrymen who were to have been exchang'd for the English carried into Holland; and I have not yet learnt how that matter came to be mismanaged. At present I have only time to add, that I am, with great and sincere esteem, &c.

B. F.

Franklin to M. de Sartine.

Passy, Feby. 13, 1780.

Sir, — Enclosed is the order your excellency required of me in the letter you yesterday did me the honour of

writing to me, relating to the English prisoners brought into l'Orient by the "Black Prince" and other American privateers.

I beg leave to mention to your Excell'y that there are still remaining in the English prisons 410 Americans, some of whom have languish'd there near three years. They had great hopes of obtaining their liberty in exchange for those taken by the squadron under Commodore Jones, a great part of which were taken by the "Alliance" and delivered to Mr. le Duc de la Vauguyon, under a kind of promise made by him to M. Jones that they should be exchanged for Americans. I have not heard that anything has been done in that respect, and I fear they will be in despair if not speedily releas'd. I therefore intreat your Excellency to take that matter into consideration, and favour me with as many English prisoners as may serve to exchange these poor people, when they shall be brought over in the cartels expected at Morlaix.

The "Black Prince," the "Black Princess" and the "Fearnot," American privateers, are, I suppose, now on a new cruise, and will, I hope, bring in more English prisoners; I hope the same also from the "Alliance" now at Corunna. If we once had our prisoners from England, several other privateers would immediately be mann'd with them, and probably give as much trouble to the English as those above mention'd.

There were 38 English and Irishmen said to be concern'd in the conspiracy on board the "Alliance" when the Marquis de la Fayette came over. They were left in prison at Brest. I do not see any probability of these being ever brought to a trial; and perhaps the best thing that can be done with them is to exchange them for honester men. If your excellency approves of it, I will

give the same orders relating to them, when you send any prisoners from that port. With greatest respect, I am, &c.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Sartine to Franklin.

VERSAILLES, February 21, 1780.

I have received, Sir, with your favour of the 13th of this month, the letter which you wrote to the Agent of the United States at L'Orient, and I have hastened to forward it to the Commissary of the Marine in that port. I doubt not but that it will arrive with sufficient promptness that the Agent may deliver to the Captain of the English Cartel the prisoners made by the "Black Prince," Privateer, under the American flag.

In regard to the reclamation which you address me in regard to the 478 prisoners delivered to the Duke de la Vauguyon, I shall have the honor of answering in a later note.

The following note to Vergennes relates to the same affair: —

Note for his excellency Monsieur le Comte de Vergennes.

16 May, 1780.

When the "Alliance" frigate arrived in France, Mr. Franklin was desirous of employing her in annoying the English trade, and obtaining prisoners to exchange for the Americans who had long languished in the prisons of England.

A cruise with a small squadron, under Commodore Jones, round the coast of Britain being about that time intended, M. Franklin was requested by his excellency the Minister of Marine to join the "Alliance" to that squadron. He cheerfully complied with that request; and

in his instructions to Capt. Jones he encouraged him by the hopes of his being useful to his country in delivering so many poor prisoners from their captivity.

As the squadron acted under American commission and colours, was commanded by an American chief, and thence understood to be American, our countrymen in the British prisons rejoict to hear of its success, and that 500 English were made prisoners in the cruise; by an exchange with whom they hoped to obtain their liberty, and to return to their families and country.

The "Alliance" alone took vessels containing near 200 of those English prisoners. The "Bonhomme Richard," which was mann'd chiefly by Americans, took in the "Serapis" a great part of the remainder.

The Ambassador of France at the Hague applied to Comm'e Jones for the prisoners, in order to execute a cartel enter'd into with the Ambassador of England. Comm'e Jones declined delivering them without orders from Mr. Franklin. The Ambassador did Mr. F. the honour of writing to him on the subject, acquainting him that Mr. Jones had urged the exchanging them for Americans, and promising to use his endeavours for that purpose.

Mr. Franklin thereupon immediately sent the orders desired, expressing at the same time his confidence in the Ambassador's promise.

The prisoners were accordingly deliver'd; but they were actually exchang'd for French.

His excellency M. de Sartine afterwards acquainted Mr. Franklin that he had not English prisoners enough at l'Orient to fill an English cartel then there. Mr. F. gave orders that 48 he had in that port should be delivered up for that purpose, 38 others at Brest to be employed in the same manner.

Mr. Franklin was afterwards informed by M. de Chaumont, that M. de Sartine had assured him that other English prisoners should be furnished to exchange for those so given up, in Holland and in France.

Mr. Franklin wrote accordingly to England, and a cartel vessel was thereupon ordered from Plymouth to Morlaix with 100 Americans. As soon as Mr. F. was acquainted with this, he applied thro' M. de Chaumont to M. de Sartine for an equal number of English; who readily agreed to furnish them, and promised to send orders immediately to march 100 from Saumur to Morlaix.

The cartel arrived, landed the 100 Americans, but was sent back empty, with only a receipt from the commissary of the port, no English being arrived for the exchange.

Mr. F. has since received letters from England acquainting him that he is charged with breach of faith, and with deceiving the Board which had the charge of managing the exchange of prisoners; and a stop is put to that exchange in consequence.

The poor American prisoners there, many of whom have been confined two or three years, and have bravely resisted all the temptations, accompanied with threats, and follow'd by ill usage, to induce them to enter into the English service, are now in despair, seeing their hopes of speedy liberty ruined by this failure.

His excellency M. de Sartine has kindly and repeatedly promised by Mr. de Chaumont, to furnish the number wanted, about 400, for exchanging the said Americans.

But it is now said that the king's order is necessary to be first obtained.

Mr. Franklin therefore earnestly requests his excellency M. le Comte de Vergennes, to support the proposition in Council, and therefore obtain liberty for those unfortunate people.

Meanwhile the miserable condition of the prisoners was in a small measure alleviated through the efforts of Franklin and his English friends. Franklin himself sent some money, and some was subscribed and put by Mr. Hodgson into the hands of Mr. Wren, a dissenting minister at Plymouth, and into the hands of friends at Portsmouth.

To Mr. Wren Franklin writes as follows:—

Passy, Feb. 26, 1780.

Revd. Sir,—Your great attention to the wants of our poor captived countrymen, and your kind and charitable care of them in their sickness and other distresses, I have often heard spoken of by such as have escaped and passed through this place, in the strongest terms of grateful acknowledgement. I beg you to accept among the rest my sincere and hearty thanks, and my best wishes for your health and prosperity.

I have put a little money lately into the hands of Mr. Digges, and now some into those of Mr. Hodgson, for the relief of the most pressing necessities of the remaining prisoners. These gentlemen will, I suppose, request your assistance in the disposition of it. I should have done it when I heard the subscription was near exhausted, if I had not been flattered with the hope that they would sooner have been exchanged,—first on account of the solemn paroles in writing given by numbers of Englishmen taken by our vessels and set at liberty, and then against those carried into Holland; but the paroles, after long indecision, I am lately told are rejected, and the exchange I proposed in Holland was refused, at first on the expectation of retaking them in their way to France, and tho' afterwards agreed to, it was through another channel, and for other prisoners. These delays have not been owing to any neglect of mine, as the prisoners of Forton

in a letter to me of the 3d instant inform me they are frequently assured. On enquiring I did not find that we had actually here a sufficient number of English to answer another cartel, unless the British government would have allowed the paroles. I kept the "Alliance" in Europe, and joined her to the little squadron under Capt. Jones, principally in hope of obtaining more prisoners to compleat the exchange, and I can now inform our people that this latter view will be accomplished, the Minister of Marine here having given me assurances that the cartels bringing over Americans shall immediately have the same number of English in exchange to the amount of 500. We have also two or three privateers out, who have already brought in near 100, and are daily making more prisoners; so that I hope their confinement of our people now nearly at an end. I shall be happy to see them at liberty in France, and will assist them what I can in returning to their native country. I have some reason to think the delays were rather occasioned by the weakness or impatience of those prisoners who basely deserted the cause of their country, and entered with their enemies; this naturally gave hopes that more might do the same, and that the longer confinement the greater would be the defection. Probably and thence the determination relating to the paroles was kept back, and I had no positive answer till within these two weeks.

The prisoners not having signed their above-mentioned letters with any names, but requesting me to answer it in a letter to you, occasions my desiring that you would be so good as to communicate to them the contents in such manner as you shall judge best.

With very great esteem and respect, which I shall rejoice in an opportunity of demonstrating, I have the honour to be, &c., &c. B. F.

Franklin to Hodgson.

PASSY, April 11, 1780.

DEAR SIR, — I received your favours of the 10th and 28th of March. The method you propose of managing the money for the prisoners is perfectly agreeable to me. You desired in your last that I would explain how it happened that no prisoners went back in the last cartel. I did not till this day well understand it myself, or I should have answered sooner. When our little squadron brought near 500 English prisoners into the Texel, I would have exchanged them then for Americans, but I was told that would not be agreed to in England, as there was a chance of retaking them in their passage to France. But a cartel being treated of, as I understand, by the ambassadors of England and France at the Hague, the French Ambassador applied to Commodore Jones for those prisoners to be exchanged then; who would not deliver them up without my orders, and a promise of exchanging them for Americans. The Ambassador thereupon wrote to me requesting such orders; which I sent accordingly, expressing my reliance that an equal number, 472, of other English would be delivered me at Morlaix to be exchanged there for Americans. After this, at the instance of Mr. de Sartine, I gave orders to our agent at L'Orient to deliver a number of other prisoners we had there to the captain of the "Happy" cartel, in exchange for so many Frenchmen, with the same reliance as above mentioned. As soon as I received your information that the cartel was sailed from Plymouth with 100 Americans, I applied for 100 English to be rendered at Morlaix for the exchange, and was told that orders should be that day given to march them thither from Saumur for that purpose. I imagined it had been done, and the exchange

made, till I heard the contrary from you. To-day I learn that they were not arrived while the cartel was there; and I have now desired of M. de Sartine that two hundred may be immediately sent over, — one to pay for the 100 Americans received, and the other to exchange a fresh parcel. His verbal answer is that the request is just, and shall be complied with; and he will write a letter to me to-morrow, which I may send over to be shown to the Board of Sick and Hurt, that will explain the matter, and clear me from any charge of bad faith. He added that he would also take the first opportunity of sending the remainder to equal the number delivered in Holland, in order to exchange for Americans, — having no scruple of doing this by advance, the Board having shewn the greatest honour and exactitude in all their proceedings. I am sure it has been my intention to do the same; and I shall alwas act accordingly. Tho I am not insensible of the injustice towards us of the Boston cartels formerly mentioned. I shall write to Mr. Hartley, from whom I have just received copies of the French certificates, &c., per next post after I receive the letter from M. de Sartine. In the meantime I wish you would be so good as to communicate to him the contents of this with my respects.

I should be glad to hear some more particulars about Mr. W., and the reasons of discarding him. I hope the rest of that worthy society are well and happy.

With great esteem I am, dear sir, &c.

B. F.

CHAPTER XIX.

MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY.

A LARGE print, widely circulated in America, represents a beautiful lady crowning Dr. Franklin with laurel, as he sits in the midst of an elegant assembly of ladies and gentlemen, prominent among whom are Louis XVI., and Marie Antoinette. The authority of this picture — which is recent — is in the following passage in Madame Campan's memoirs: —

"Elegant fêtes were given to Dr. Franklin, who united the renown of one of the most skilful naturalists, with the patriotic virtues which had made him embrace the noble rôle of Apostle of Liberty. I was present at one of these fêtes, where the most beautiful of three hundred women was designated to go and place on the philosopher's white locks a crown of laurel, and to give the old man two kisses on his cheeks."

It will be observed that Madame Campan does not say that the King and Queen were present, and there is no reason to suppose that they were. In the "Mémoires," — which relate specially to the Court, as distinguished from the Government, or from life in Paris, or general politics, — very little reference is made to American politics, and almost none to Franklin or his associates. Within a few years past the correspondence of Maria Theresa with her unfortunate daughter, and with Mercy, the Austrian minister, has been printed in full. It is a most melancholy

disclosure of the frivolity of the life of this undisciplined young woman, then in the first excitement of her career as wife of a king who adored her, and who supposed himself to be an absolute monarch. In 1780 — the year to which we have now come — she was twenty-five years old, and had been ten years married. Poor Mercy writes of her to her mother: "Any impression made upon this august and charming princess is so fleeting that, with all the *esprit* possible, — with all possible judgment and good faith, — she is constantly torn out from her true self, even though she knows she is led into error." In these very years, the gambling at Court, where she was herself partner in a faro bank, was such as terrified him and Maria Theresa; and Marie Antoinette herself descends to flat falsehood in pretending to her mother that she has suppressed it.

In this year the Government of France, having laid aside its plans for invading England, determined to send out Rochambeau, with an allied army, to America. To this force Marie Antoinette alludes once or twice in her letters to her mother, — and these make all her references to the American Revolution.

In the correspondence between mother and daughter, the first reference to the American struggle is made by Maria Theresa, in a letter in which she tells her daughter that she must now pay more attention to affairs of state:[1] "These reflections of a good old mamma and sovereign, have led me to give new instructions to Mercy. I have told him that he must inform you about public affairs, and arrange with you what views you must take with your ministers. These are the most important objects, — which I speak of only in passing. The dissensions between the Turks and Russians, those between Spain and

[1] February 3, 1777.

Portugal, as well as the war in America, may very easily cause a conflagration, into which I might be drawn in spite of myself."

Marie Antoinette never alludes to the American war, nor to the envoys, until the 18th of March, 1778, when she says: "The King has directed that the King of England shall be told that he has made a treaty with the Americans. Mylord Stormont received on Sunday the orders of his Court to leave France. It seems as if our marine, about which much has been done for a long time, will soon be in action. God grant that all these movements may not bring on war on land!" She goes on to speak of the duel between the Count d'Artois and the Duke of Burgundy.

Two years after, on the 16th of March, 1780: "We were arranging to send eight or ten thousand good troops to America, at the end of the month, — they are to be collected in Brittany, — but I believe that this news will defer the embarcation. We cannot risk this great force without being sure of the sea, — it would be frightful to sustain more misfortunes there; I own to you I cannot think of it coolly. I hope Mme. de Starkemburg will be pleased with what I have done [for her] brother; I have procured a place for him in this expedition. This brother was Prince Emmanuel de Salm."

On the 13th of April she says, "The troops destined for the islands are on board, and only await a favorable wind." This was Rochambeau's expedition. Her allusion to the islands may not be bad geography, for they went by way of the West Indies. "God grant that they arrive happily." And on the 13th of July she writes, "The loss of Charleston is very annoying, on account of the advantage which it will give to the English, and their boasting about it; it is perhaps worse on account of the

bad defence of the Americans, — nothing can be hoped from such bad troops." These are her only allusions to the alliance. Her mother died on the 29th of November, 1780, and this curious and valuable correspondence comes to an end at that date.

Early in the year 1780, Franklin received the orders of Congress to procure some medals for officers who had distinguished themselves in its service. These medals are frequently alluded to in the letters, and are well known to numismatists. Gérard returned from Philadelphia, where Luzerne took his place. And on the 4th of February, 1780, Mr. John Adams, with Mr. Dana and Mr. Thaxter, arrived in Paris, having landed at Corunna. He had been sent out with a commission to negotiate a peace whenever England might propose it. The suggestion had been made by Gérard to Congress, and renewed by Luzerne. Both of these gentlemen, and Vergennes, from whom it came, expected that Franklin would be named. Here Congress disappointed them, as Mr. Adams says, and he adds that in giving him a commission to negotiate a treaty of commerce with England, Congress went farther than the French Court meant or desired. Mr. Adams remained in Paris with his two sons until July, when he repaired to Amsterdam, and began upon his negotiations there. While in Paris he was not, as before, a colleague with Franklin. He was engaged in a curious discussion with Vergennes, as to his reception at Court and the publicity which should be given to his commission, in which Vergennes offended him by a tone of presumption, which even so skilful a diplomatist could not avoid, with the nation whose strength he did not yet know.

At the beginning of the year, Paul Jones came up to Paris, as has been said. He was received with enthusiasm everywhere, especially at the opera. By a curious

bit of stage effect, a wreath of laurel was arranged over the seat assigned to him at one of the theatres, which was made to descend at the proper moment upon his head. The English journals had so persistently called him by bad names, and represented him as the black pirate of romance, that surprise was excited by his courtesy of bearing. "This brave cruiser," says Grimm, "who has given so many proofs of the strongest heart and the most determined courage, is none the less a man of the world, of great intelligence and sweetness. It is a curious thing that he makes many verses, full of grace and tenderness, — that the sort of poetry which seems to have most charm for his genius is elegy and eclogue. The Masonic Lodge of the Nine-Sisters has engaged Houdon to make his bust." And this bust was exhibited at the Salon the next year.

In an earlier chapter the reader has seen how intimate were the friendly relations between Franklin and his neighbor Mad. Helvetius. It is at the beginning of the year 1780 that there was circulated in Paris the funny account of Franklin's visit to the Elysian Fields, and his meeting with her husband the philosopher. To these years of comparative confidence we are to refer some of his best minor essays on subjects not referring to politics. The "Story of the Whistle" was addressed to Madame Brillon, whom Franklin used to call the "brillante aimable." The family of M. Brillon lived near him, and he was very intimate there. The "Dialogue with the Gout" is another of these bagatelles, as he called them. He amused himself with his types, and was beginning to experiment with the copying press, — since so largely used in duplicating correspondence. The American public officers received it through him.

From his press, perhaps, were circulated in Paris Franklin's "Twelve Principles," to which he had reduced the

whole system of the Economists. They still make a good epitome of that system, with its good sense and its errors. They could have been printed on a small broad-side, and probably were so circulated in Paris; but we have found no copy in that form.

From the tenor of all Franklin's correspondence of the year 1780, that which has been printed heretofore and the letters now open to us, it is clear that the year was a more agreeable year than either of those which had passed before. Success in the great contest was only a matter of time. With the departure of Lee, and with Franklin's own appointment as Plenipotentiary, the pettinesses of domestic quarrel were over. He was known and beloved in Paris, and had won the respect of circles which at first distrusted him. A writer of the time says that his likeness was everywhere. He himself sends to Mrs. Jay in Madrid one of the prints, probably that with Turgot's famous verse, "Eripuit coelo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis," and says it is one of five or six which have been published. Nogaret, a Frenchman, who sent him a translation of this verse, says the print had made the fortune of the engraver.

With these explanations we may print with hardly any other comment, some letters for the year; not for their illustration of serious or contested points of history, but for the broken lights which they give us as to his own personal life or some custom of the time.

Franklin to Jonathan Williams.

Passy, Jan. 9, 1780.

Dear Jonathan, — I received your letters, with the samples of Cloths, but the shirt and stockings are not arriv'd. Having no kind of judgement in such commodi-

ties, I can make no choice. You have the precise and particular orders of the Committee of Congress relating to the soldiers' dress, to which you must conform as exactly as possible. I do not chuse to make a contract with you for the Cloathes at fix'd prices. That method could be subject to many malevolent reflections. It is better that you should buy the materials and employ the work-folks on the best terms you can for the publick, and content yourself with the commission of $1\frac{1}{2}$ p cent, which I agree to allow you, in consideration of its being a business consisting of so many particulars as to require a good deal of attention, and take up a great deal of your time in the execution, and in keeping the accounts. I depend much on your integrity and diligence in this affair, and I flatter myself that you will so conduct it as to do honour to yourself and to me. Mr. de Chaumont will acquaint you what quantity of hats, shirts, stockings, and shoes are to be furnished. As the funds come to hand quarterly, I can only pay quarterly. You will therefore make all your purchases on those terms, to be paid $\frac{1}{4}$ in May, another in August, a third November, and the fourth in February, 1781. Your bills drawn on and after the 15th of each of those months, for those quarterly payments, at 10 days' sight will be punctually honoured.

The provision is to be for 15,000 men.

My love to the good girls. I am ever

Your affectionate uncle, &c.,

Franklin to M. Adamoli, [*Rue des Vieux Augustins, Hôtel de Chartres*].

Passy, Jan. 29, 1780.

Sir, — I received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 22 instant, with a copy of the verses

in which I find myself mention'd but too advantageously. Please to accept my thankful acknowledgements.

I do not perfectly comprehend your plan of finding the different relations of weights, measures, &c., by means of compass. But I believe the English Society of Emulation makes no distinction of nations in the premiums they offer. I should however think that as there is a Society of the same kind existing in France, it might be well to propose it first to them. But of this you can best judge. The English society has lately offered a reward for the discovery of a fixed universal measure. I enclose a copy of the papers; and have the honour to be with great regard, Sir, &c.

The following memorandum in French, of the date of Feb. 17, 1780, introduces to us the matter of the medals: —

Liste des medailles accordées par les États Unis de l'Amérique depuis le commencement de la guerre jusqu'en 1780, — six medailles: —

Noms.	*Actions.*	*Années.*
Son Excellence le General Washington.	Pour la prise de Boston,	1776.
Son Excellence le Général Gates.	Pour la prise de l'Armee de Burgoyne à Saratoga,	1777.
Son Excellence le Général Wayne (blessé).	Pour la prise de Stony Pointe,	1779.
L'honorable Lt. Col. de Fleury.	Pour la prise de Stony Pointe,	1779.
L'honorable Lt. Col. Steward (tué).	Pour la prise de Stony Pointe,	1779.
L'honorable Lt. Col. Lee.	Pour la prise du Fort Paulus Hook,	1779.

PASSY, Jan. 29, 1780.

M. le Colonel Fleury, Hôtel de Picardy, Rue de Seine:

SIR, — Having as yet had no medal struck here, I am not acquainted with any artist of that sort. If you can find one, and bring him to me, I will endeavour to agree with him to get it done as soon as may be; but I cannot imagine it possible in so short a time as you mention. I cannot state any certain sum till I have talked with the artist. I thought to enquire of Mr. Tillet, Hôtel des Monnoies, who must be acquainted with such artists. He is your neighbour, and I wish you would request him, as from me, to recommend one.

With the greatest esteem, I have the honour to be, &c.

Franklin to Fleury.

PASSY, Feb. 26, 1780.

SIR, — I am sorry you were disappointed in meeting me at Versailles. In all your billets, except that of yesterday, you omitted mentioning where you lodged; otherwise I could have acquainted you that I should not be at Court on the day you expected me.

I suppose you will acquaint the Congress or General Washington with your reasons for desiring a prolongation of your furlow. As you have not communicated them to me, I know not what to say in order to enforce them; I can therefore only forward your request, and pray that it may be favourably considered, which I shall do. I imagine, however, that the Congress have so high an opinion of your merit as an officer, and the importance of having you in actual service, that the request will not be lightly granted.

With great esteem, &c.

Franklin to John Adams.

Passy, April 22, 1780.

Dear Sir, — The letter your excellency did me the honour of writing to me yesterday, gives me the first information of the resolution mentioned as taken by the State of Maryland relating to their money in England. If there is no mistake in the intelligence, which I apprehend there may be, and such a power as is suppos'd should come to my hands, I shall then take your Excellency's recommendation — which has great weight with me — into consideration. At present I can only say that I shall not name my nephew Mr. Williams; for tho' I have a great opinion of his ability and integrity, and think that by his early declaration and attachment to our cause, and activity in its service, he has a good deal of merit with the States in general, I know of none that he has with Maryland in particular; and as the other four are natives of that state, I think the choice ought to be from among them. Mr. Williams will however be very sensible of the honour done him by being put into the nomination. With the greatest respect, I have the honour to be

Your excellency's most obedient
and most humble servant, B. F.

[Upon a separate paper.]

Mr. Franklin presents his compts. to Mr. Adams, and requests he would send him by the bearer the book of treaties, which he has just now occasion to consult, but will return in a day or two.

Franklin to Messrs. Van de Perre and Meyners
[Merchants at Middleburg, Holland].

Passy, April 23, '80.

Gentlemen, — I duly received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 6th instant. I took the

first opportunity of communicating it to Commodore Jones, and I send you enclosed the answer I have received from him, by which you will perceive that he absolutely denies his having used any force to obtain from your captain the declaration he made that the cargo was English property; but asserts that the said declaration was voluntarily made, the captain supposing him and his ship, the "Alliance," to be English. However this may be, I shall communicate your demand to the Congress, and as we have good laws, and regular courts of Admiralty in all the States, for the trial of such causes, I have no doubt of your obtaining that justice which your cause shall appear to merit. You will see by the enclos'd papers an instance of the regard to Justice shown by the Congress to the subjects of Portugal, a nation which has been not only unfriendly to us, but whose king, in the beginning of our troubles, issued a very severe edict against us. There is, therefore, no probability that like justice will be refused to the subjects of their High Mightinesses, whom the United States highly respect, and with whom they desire to maintain a good understanding, with a friendly and free commerce between the two nations. I have the honour to be, with respectful consideration, &c.

Franklin to Bache [*his son-in-law*].

Passy, June 3, 1780.

Dear Son, — I seldom hear from you or Sally, but I have lately had the satisfaction of hearing of you, that you and yours were all well the beginning of April last. I send you in a parcel by this opportunity some of the correspondence between Ben and me. He was well a few weeks since, and very kindly notic'd where he is by some

respectable people. I continue, thanks to God, well and hearty, and am ever

Your affectionate father.

My love to Will and the little ones.

Franklin to Robt. Troup [*Secretary to the Board of Treasury*].

Passy, Aug. 10, 1780.

Sir, — I received the letter you wrote me by order of the Board of Treasury, dated Sept. 29, 1779, requesting me to procure medals to be struck here, agreeable to the several resolutions of Congress you enclosed to me. I have got one of them finished, that in silver for Colonel Fleury, and two others with the same devices relating to Stony Point, one for Major General Wayne in gold, and one for Major Stuart in silver. They are well done by the King's medallist, but the price is high, each die costing 1000 livres. Col. Fleury's is deliver'd to his order here, he being return'd to America. The other two will go by the first good opportunity. I shall also forward the engraving of the others as fast as possible. Be pleased to present my respects to the Board, who I wish had furnished me with the devices proper for the other medals; the difficulty of pleasing myself with regard to them occasioning some delay.

I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

Franklin to S. Huntington [*President of Congress*].

Passy, Aug. 10. 1780.

Sir, — Having but just been acquainted with this opportunity, which goes directly, I have only time to write a few lines, and only leave to send a letter, without any pacquets of newspapers.

Count D'Estaing is gone to Spain to take the command of the united fleet.

The important alliance of the neutral powers for the protection of trade is nearly compleated. It has met with some delays and obstructions in Holland thro' English influence, tho' the plan is more particularly to the advantage of the state, wch subsists by commerce and carriage.

The Emperor is gone to Russia on a visit to that Empress.

The disposition of this Court towards us continues as favourable as ever, tho' some displeasure had lately been unluckily given to it, which perhaps will be explained to you by M. le Chevalier de la Luzerne.[1]

The departure of the supplies obtained here last spring have met with delays from various unforeseen causes. Some are, however, gone in the "Alliance;" more will go in the "Ariel," Comme. Jones, and the rest being the greatest part in a large ship we have chartered.

There is, in all, clothing made up for 10,000 men, 15,000 stand of arms, 2,000 barrels of gunpowder, some cannon, and a good deal of cloth, &c., unmade up. I hope all will safely arrive before winter.

The "Ariel" will sail next week with my fuller despatches.

I have furnished Messrs. Jay and Adams with the moneys you ordered, and more since, those sums being expended and no supplies arrived to them.

I have paid the interest bills to M. Beaumarchais. I continue to pay punctually your loan interest bills, and I have to prevent their being protested; promised payment of those bills arrived in Holland, drawn on Mr. Laurens,

[1] The reference is to Mr. Adams's difficulty with Vergennes. See the letter at the end of this chapter.

who has not yet appeared. I am anxious to support the credit of the Congress. They will not suffer me to lose my own, but if these *extra* demands are multiplied upon me and no supplies sent, I must become a bankrupt, for I cannot continually worry the Court for more money.

The privateers, "Black Prince" and "Black Princess," with Congress commissions issued here by me, and mann'd partly by Americans, have greatly harassed the English coasting trade, having taken in 18 months near 120 sail. The Prince was wreck'd on this coast, the men saved. The Princess still reigns, and in a late cruise of 20 days, between June 20 and July 10, took 28 prizes, some very valuable.

I must repeat my motion that the Congress would appoint consuls in the principal ports, to take care of their maritime and commercial affairs; and beg earnestly that no more frigates may be sent here to my care.

Much clamour has been made here about the depreciation of our money, but it is a good deal abated. I wish, however, to be furnished with authentic informations of the intentions of Congress relative to that matter.

Mr. Adams is gone to Holland, for a few weeks. Mr. Dana remains here.

I am told complaints are likely to be made against me by Messrs. Lee and Izard, and Capt. Landais. If such should be laid before Congress, I wish to receive copies of them; and knowing the uprightness and cleanness of my own conduct, I have no doubt of answering them to satisfaction. I hear you have already had some sheets of the kind from Mr. Lee.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to Congress, and assure them of my most faithful services.

I have the honour to be, with great respect, &c., &c.

P. S. The "Fier Rodrigue," with her convoy from Virginia, are all safe arrived, except one vessel that foundered at sea, — the men saved.

The letters from Franklin home will be better understood hereafter by reading them in connection with the information given to him by James Lovell, Secretary to Congress.

[*Aug.* 15, 80.] Lovell notifies him that bills were to be drawn upon him to the amount of 100,000 dollars. "The breaches upon our forces at the southward by the possession which the enemy have there, made this disagreeable step necessary for the express purpose of supporting Gen. Gates in that department."

[*Sep.* 7, 1780, *same to the same.*] Stating the case a little more fully, and promising not to do so again, with the information of cession by New York of her western lands, and a tax laid of 3,000,000 in silver.

[*In Congress*, 19 *May*, 1780.] *Resolved*, That bills be immediately drawn on the Honble. Docr. B Franklin for 25,000 dollars, payable at 60 days' sight.[1]

That the money arising from the sale be appropriated and applied solely to the bringing the army into the field and forwarding their supplies in such manner as the exigency and nature of the service may require.

[*August 9th.*] *Resolved*, That the Board of Treasury be directed to prepare bills of exchange of suitable denom inations upon the Honble Benjamin Franklin, Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Versailles, for one hundred thousand dollars in specie.

That the bills be made payable at ninety days' sight.

[*August* 15.] Detailing the manner of cashing the bills, and the mode of expenditure of the returns for "the purchase of provisions and other supplies absolutely necessary for the subsistence of the southern army."

[1] They drew on Jay for the same sum at the same time.

Franklin to Ross.

PASSY, Sept. 18, 1780.

DEAR SIR, — I received your favour of the 11th with the accounts, bill of lading, &c., of the goods you have shipped. If you remember right, I promised only to assist you in the freight, but you have drawn upon me for almost an equal sum over and above, on an account of charges, commissions, &c. These kind of encroachments are disagreeable, as well as inconvenient. I have, however, accepted your bills; but do not try me any more in that way.

I never could understand the delay in payment of the prize money, &c. I never had anything to do with that money; and as it seemed to have some connection with a quarrel between two of my friends, M. de Chaumont and Capt. Jones, I did not incline to meddle with the affair, because I would not be drawn into the dispute. It would have been right, I think, if Capt. Jones had applied directly to M. de Sartine.

With great esteem, I have the honour to be, &c., &c.

Franklin to Digges.

PASSY, Oct. 9, 1780.

DEAR SIR, — I received the china portrait of Washington in good order, but no other you mention. Nor has the picture of the good bishop ever yet appeared I begin to be in pain about it, having heard nothing of it from any place on this side of the water, and I have more than one reason for setting a high value on it.

Your favour of the 20 and 29th past came duly to hand, and are very pleasing. Inclosed is my answer to a letter from some persons recommended by you.

I have already written to you about Goddard's bill, and I sent you Jones's, which I hope you received.

I have been made happy by visits from your two friends. I send this by them, and hope they will have a prosperous journey. They are worthy and amiable men.

There is no news here at present but what comes in your newspapers. I am, with great regard, &c., &c.

Mr. John Adams remained in Paris till midsummer, as has been said. He was commissioned to negotiate peace with England. When he notified Vergennes of his arrival, and proposed to consult him regarding his mission, Vergennes replied by saying that he could do this better when he had received a copy of Mr. Adams's instructions, which M. Luzerne would undoubtedly send him from Philadelphia. This was certainly very careless, if not very arrogant language on the part of Vergennes. It intimated, only too directly, that the French Government regarded the Republic as simply a tool of its own manufacture, and that the affectation of American independence was only kept up as a convenience of European diplomacy. This letter did not make Mr. Adams's relations with Vergennes easy from the beginning. But Mr. Adams avoided a quarrel, and as the summer came on, was in the habit of communicating directly with him, and sending to him private information which his American correspondents had sent him. One of these letters was made by Vergennes the occasion for discussing the questions which turned up under the depreciation of currency: Must the foreign creditors be satisfied with payments at the rates which the local legislatures placed on paper money? Mr. Adams, in a careful paper, argued that they must be. Vergennes indignantly referred the whole subject to Franklin, who in his turn referred it all to Congress.

It is this difficulty to which Franklin alludes in his letter to Huntington which the reader has seen.

Mr. Adams felt, to the day of his death, that Franklin did not show a proper American spirit in this matter, and that all through the subsequent negotiations he was subservient to the French interest. "He began,"[1] as his grandson says, "to entertain doubts of his sincerity."

With Mr. Adams's controversy with Vergennes, we have nothing here to do. It made his position in Paris disagreeable, and he soon left for Amsterdam, where Congress soon commissioned him, in the place of Laurens. But it is necessary for us to note the date of his change of view regarding Dr. Franklin, that we may call to our readers' attention the date, which can now be fixed quite certainly, when his distrust of Mr. Adams began to approach Mr. Adams's for him. On the 30th of August, 1780, he wrote explicitly to Vergennes in these words: —

Passy, August 30, 1780.

Sir, — It was indeed with very great pleasure that I received the letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me, communicating that of the President of Congress, and the resolutions of that body relative to the succours then expected; for the sentiments therein expressed are so different from the language held by Mr. Adams in his late letters to your excellency as to make it clear that it was from his particular indiscretion alone, and not from any instructions received by him, that he has given such just cause of displeasure, and that it is impossible his conduct therein should be approved by his constituents. I am glad that he has not admitted me to any participation of those writings, and that he has taken the resolution he expresses of not communicating with

[1] Life and Works of John Adams, i. 320.

me, — or making me of use in his future correspondence; a resolution that I believe he will keep, — as he has never yet communicated to me more of his business in Europe than I have seen in the newspapers. I live upon terms of civility with him, but not of intimacy. I shall, as you desire, lay before Congress the whole correspondence which you have sent me for that purpose. With the greatest and most sincere respect, I am Sir, &c. &c.

W. Temple Franklin to Jon. Williams.

Passy, 25 Oct., 1780.

Dear Jonathan, — My Grandfather is laid up with the gout, and cannot write. He directs me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th inst. He is entirely unacquainted what the freight you propose is worth, but in order to assist the ship "Mars" in returning to Boston, he is willing to advance twelve thousand tons of the military stores now in the arsenal at Nantes. If Mr. Austin thinks fit he may take more. The 12,000 livres is intended to be on acct. of said freight; the remainder to be paid by Congress when they shall have settled with state of Massachusetts what they are to pay per ton.

This is all my grandfather can do, and he desires me to add that he hopes you will not by any fresh propositions endeavor to get more money from him.

We have not as yet an ans. from the Farmers-General relative to the order desired of *them* for the transport of the saltpetre.

Your communicating this letter to M. Austin will render my writing to him unnecessary. Please to make him my complts.

Inclosed you have the order you desired for Mr. Schweighauser.

P. S. M. Chaumont, who is present, desires me to make you his complts.

To the following letter we have heretofore only had Vergennes' answer: —

Franklin to Vergennes.

Passy, Nov. 19, 1780.

Sir, — I lately received from America the enclosed letters, and resolutions of Congress. Such unexpected drafts give me pain, as they oblige me either to give your excellency of such applications or to support their which would much [sic]. But your excellency will see the pressing necessity that has driven the Congress into this measure; they could not suddenly by any other means raise the money necessary to put their troops in motion and to co-operate with those of the king; and I hope his majesty, to whose goodness we are already so indebted, will in the course of the next year enable me to pay these bills. None of them have yet appeared; their times of payment are two and three months after sight, and they will probably be, many of them, long on their way, as America bills often come round by the West Indies.

With the greatest respect I am, sir, &c., &c.

A formal memorial of Congress shows how humiliating was their attitude.

The United States of America, in Congress assembled, to their Great, Faithful, and Beloved Friend and Ally, Louis the 16th, King of France and Navarre.

Great, Faithful, and Beloved Friend and Ally, — Persuaded of your Majesty's friendship and of your earnest desire to prosecute the war with glory and advantage to the alliance, we ought not to conceal from your Majesty

the embarrassments which have attended our national affairs, and rendered the last campaign unsuccessful.

A naval superiority in the American seas having enabled the enemy, in the midst of last winter, to divide their army and extend the war in the Southern States, Charlestown was subdued before a sufficient force could be assembled for its relief.

With unabated ardor and at a vast expense we prepared for the succeeding campaign, — a campaign from which, in a dependence on the co-operation of the squadron and troops generously destined by your Majesty for our assistance, we had formed the highest expectations. Again the enemy frustrated our measures. Your Majesty's succours were confined within the harbour of Newport, while the main body of the British army took refuge in their fortress and under the protection of their marine. Declining to hazard a battle in the open field and regardless of their rank among civilised nations, they descended to wage a predatory war. Britons and savages united in sudden irruptions on our northern and western frontiers, and marked their progress with blood and desolation.

The acquisition of Charlestown — with the advantages gained in Georgia, and the defeat of a small army, composed chiefly of militia, which had been hastily collected to check their operations — encouraged the British commander in that quarter to penetrate through South Carolina; and the ordinary calamities of war were embittered by implacable vengeance. They did not, however, long enjoy their triumph. Instead of being depressed, impending danger served only to rouse our citizens to correspondent exertions; and by a series of gallant and successful enterprises they compelled the enemy to retreat with precipitation and disgrace.

They seem, however, resolved by all possible efforts, not

only to retain their posts in Georgia and South Carolina, but to renew their attempts on North Carolina. To divert the reinforcements destined for those states, they are now executing an enterprize against the sea-coast of Virginia; and from their preparations at New York, and intelligence from Europe, it is manifest that the four Southern States will now become a principal object of their hostilities.

It is the voice of the people and the resolution of Congress to prosecute the war with redoubled vigor, and to draw into the field a permanent and well appointed army of 35,000 regular troops. By this decisive effort we trust that we shall be able, under the divine blessing, so effectually to co-operate with your Majesty's marine and land forces as to expel the common enemy from our country, and render the great object of the alliance perpetual. But to accomplish an enterprize of such magnitude, and so interesting to both nations, whatever may be our spirit and our exertions, we know that our internal resources must prove incompetent. The sincerity of this declaration will be manifest from a short review of our circumstances.

Unpractised in military arts and unprepared with the means of defence, we were suddenly invaded by a formidable and vindictive nation. We supported the unequal conflict for years with very little foreign aid but what was derived from your Majesty's generous friendship. Exertions uncommon even among the most wealthy and most established governments necessarily exhausted our finances, plunged us into debt, and anticipated our taxes; while the depredations of an active enemy, by sea and land, made a deep impression on our commerce and our productions. Thus encompassed with difficulties, in our representation to your Majesty of the 14th of June, 1779, we disclosed our wants, and requested your Majesty to furnish us with Clothing, arms, and ammunition for the

last campaign, on the credit of the United States. We entertain a lively sense of your Majesty's friendly disposition in enabling our Minister to procure a part of those supplies, of which, through unfortunate events, a very small proportion hath arrived. The sufferings of our army from this disappointment have been so severe that we must rely on your majesty's attention to our welfare for effectual assistance.

The articles of the estimate transmitted to our Minister are essential to our Army, and we flatter ourselves that through your Majesty's interposition they will be supplied.

At a time when we feel ourselves so strongly impressed by the weight of past obligations, it is with the utmost reluctance that we yield to the emergency of our affairs in requesting additional favours. An unreserved confidence in your Majesty, and a well grounded assurance that we ask no more than is necessary to enable us effectually to co-operate with your Majesty in terminating the war with glory and success, must be our justification. It is well known that when the King of Great Britain found himself unable to subdue the populous states of North America by force, or to seduce them by art to relinquish the alliance with your Majesty, he resolved to protract the war, in expectation that the loss of our commerce and the derangement of our finances must eventually compel us to submit to his domination. Apprized of the necessity of foreign aids of money to support us in a contest with a nation so rich and powerful, we have long since authorized our ministers to borrow a sufficient sum in your Majesty's dominions, and in Spain, and Holland, on the credit of the United States. We now view the prospect of a disappointment; as the late misfortunes in the Southern States, and the ravages of the northern and

western frontiers have in a very considerable degree impaired our internal resources. From a full investigation of our circumstances it is manifest, that in aid of our utmost exertions, a foreign loan of specie, at least to the amount of twenty-five millions of livres, will be indispensably necessary for a vigourous prosecution of the war.

On an occasion in which the independence of these United States and your Majesty's glory are so intimately connected, we are constrained to request your Majesty effectually to support the applications of our Ministers for that loan. So essential is it to the common cause, that we shall without it be pressed with wants and distresses which may render all our efforts languid, precarious, and undecisive. Whether it shall please your Majesty to stipulate for this necessary aid as our security, or to advance it from your royal coffers, we do hereby solemnly pledge the faith of these United States to indemnify or reimburse your Majesty according to the nature of the case both for principal and interest, in such manner as shall be agreed upon with our minister at your Majesty's Court.

We beseech the supreme disposer of events to keep your Majesty in his holy protection, and long to continue to France the blessings arising from the administration of a prince who nobly asserts the rights of mankind.

Done at Philadelphia the twenty-second day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty and in the fifth year of our Independence by the Congress of the United States of North America.

Your Faithful Friends and Allies.

SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, *President.*

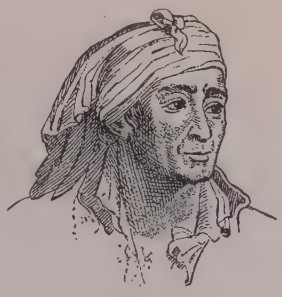
Attest, CHAS. THOMSON, *Sec'y.*

In his reply to Franklin, Vergennes says of this appeal, "You can easily imagine my astonishment at your request. . . . Nevertheless, sir, I am very desirous of assisting you out of the embarrassed situation in which these repeated drafts of Congress have placed you, and for this purpose I shall endeavor to procure for you for the next year the same aid that I have been able to furnish in the course of the present."

Franklin to Marat.

PASSY, Nov. 24, 1780.

SIR, — I received your obliging invitation to attend your curious experiments, on some days between the 21 and 30th of this month; but as I am laid up with the gout, and see no prospect of being able to go to Paris within that time, I can only return you my thanks. If you have any description of those experiments written, I should be glad to see it, unless inconvenient to you. With great regard, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c., &c.



MARAT.

Franklin to Searle.

PASSY, Nov. 30, 1780.

DEAR SIR, — I received your kind letter of the 20th, and am very sensible of your friendship. Arnold's baseness and treachery is astonishing. I thank you for the account you give me of his preceding conduct, which I never knew before, and shall make a proper use of. I have just received a very particular account of his plot, which is too long to transcribe by this post, but you will

see it by next. In the meantime Mr. Adams will communicate to you an extract of a comfortable letter to me from New Port. General Washington was at Bergen near New York the 19th October. I hope your fears that there may be Arnolds at Paris are groundless. But in such time one cannot be too much on one's guard, and I am obliged to you for the caution.

With great esteem, &c. &c.

Franklin to Alex. Small.[1]

PASSY, Dec. 7, 1780.

DEAR SIR, — I wrote you a few days since, enclosing a copy of the translations of your paper on the gout. It was M. Turgot, who, admiring, got it translated and printed, and gave away numbers of copies to his friends and others, where I think it may do good. He is a brother sufferer in that distemper. I wish to see a copy in which you have made corrections. Send me at least the corrections. I will send you per next opportunity, for your amusement, a dialogue I have lately written on the same subject. Let me know how to direct to you.

I thank you for the extract from the "Berne Memoirs;" I shall add them, by way of note, to your paper on hospitals, &c.

I am glad to hear that Mrs Stevenson and Mrs. Hewson are well. Be so good as to forward the enclosed to them.

My best respects to our friend. When you write again

[1] Alexander Small was an eminent English physician, spoken of already. He was brother of Col. Small, — the same who recognized Warren at Bunker Hill. In July, 1780, he passed through Paris, and Franklin then had some correspondence with him, as "an old friend." This matter of the gout was then a subject of correspondence. See SPARKS's Franklin, viii. 481.

please to let me know if Mr. Steele is still in England, and send me if you can one of his tracts containing the manner of noting the modulation of the voice in speaking. I am ever, with sincere esteem and affection, dear Sir, &c.

Franklin to Lafayette.

PASSY, Dec. 9, 1780.

DEAR SIR, — I received your very kind letter of the 9th of October, dated at the light camp on Passaic River. It is the only one of yours that has yet come to my hands. I lament with you the circumstances that prevented the placing a stronger naval force in North America last summer, and the consequences of that failure; but am nevertheless very sensible of the advantages that attended the arrival of that we have. The Minister you left in the Marine Department here is since changed;[1] but the good disposition of the Court towards us remains the same. The faults common fame ascribes to him are that he spent too much money on his fleet, and that too little was done by it. I hope his successor will furnish you the addition you wish for.

There has been a kind of fatality attending the affair of sending out the clothing. A number of unforeseen and unaccountable accidents have delayed and prevented it from time to time. Part of it is, however, at length gone; and the rest in a fair way of going soon, with the arms, powder, &c. You may depend on my procuring and forwarding all I can that is necessary for the operations of our Army.

I congratulate you on your escape from Arnold's treachery. His character is, in the sight of all Europe, already on the gibbet, and will hang there in chains for ages.

[1] The Marquis de Castries was Sartine's successor.

I wish you had been more particular relating to the plan you mention of the Eastern States; as I do not understand it.

You being upon the spot can easily obtain and send me all the authenticated accounts of the enemies' barbarity that are necessary for our little book; or what is better, get somebody there to write it, and send me a copy that I may adapt the cuts to it. I have found an excellent engraver for the purpose.

My best wishes always attend you, — being with the most perfect esteem and affection, dear Sir, your, &c.

P. S. My grandson presents his respects.

In this year the neutral powers of the North of Europe, were solicited by the Empress of Russia to unite in the rules regarding neutrals which have since become so important a part of international law.

The American Congress readily gave its assent to these rules in the resolutions which follow: —

Extract from the Journals of Congress, October 5, 1780.

Congress took into consideration the Report of the Committee on the motion relating to the propositions of the Empress of Russia, and thereupon came to the following Resolutions: —

Her Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, attentive to the freedom of Commerce, and the Rights of Nations, in her Declaration to the belligerent and neutral Powers, having proposed regulations, founded upon principles of Justice, Equity, and Moderation, of which their most Christian and Catholic Majesties, and most of the neutral Maritime Powers of Europe, have declared their approbation, —

Congress, willing to testify their regard to the Rights of Commerce, and their respect for the Sovereign who hath proposed, and the Powers who have approved the said regulation, Resolve —

That the Board of Admiralty prepare and report instructions for the commanders of armed vessels commissioned by the United States, conformable to the principles contained in the Declaration of the Empress of All the Russias on the rights of neutral vessels.

That the Ministers Plenipotentiary from the United States, if invited thereto, be and hereby are respectively empowered to accede to such regulations, conformable to the spirit of the said Declaration, as may be agreed upon by the Congress expected to assemble in pursuance of the invitation of Her Imperial Majesty.

Ordered, that copies of the above Resolutions be transmitted to the respective Ministers of the United States at Foreign Courts, and to the Honourable the Minister Plenipotentiary of France.

CHAPTER XX.

THE MADRID CORRESPONDENCE. — 1780.

IN the Summer of 1779 Congress practically decided to send an envoy to Spain, who might negotiate a treaty, and perhaps a loan. Arthur Lee had undertaken this business two years before, but had been stopped on the way. Now, however, though the time was hardly more propitious, it seemed necessary to take some step. Spain and France had concluded a convention which was on the whole dangerous to the Republic. France was to undertake the invasion of Great Britain or Ireland, but, most important, the two Courts bound themselves to continue the war till Gibraltar should be given up. It seemed to be the desire of the two Courts that America should join the alliance, and certainly the United States was forced to do something. But the views of the three nations were conflicting. Spain desired to exclude the United States from the free navigation of the Mississippi, or even from any navigation of it. She saw in the independence of the United States, a precedent to be followed by her own American colonies. France was not unwilling that the United States should remain a mere strip by the Atlantic seaboard. The United States, on the other hand, wished for a free share in the Newfoundland fisheries; and her pioneers had already seized possession of the banks of the Ohio, and were overrunning the northwest territory.

Congress was at this time considering bases of a possible peace: territory to stretch from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, from Florida to Canada and Nova Scotia; free navigation of the Mississippi; freedom of the Newfoundland fisheries. The New Englanders would have the fisheries insisted upon; Jay, and the State of New York thought that they should not be a *sine qua non*. Gérard, the French minister, intimated that it was not according to the policy of France that the United States should have a share in the fisheries. Congress was about to ask the King of France for a new loan, and the right of fishery was not insisted upon. The appointment of a minister to Spain brought up the question of the Mississippi. The United States was willing to guarantee Florida to Spain, provided the Mississippi could remain open. At the same time the minister was to expose to the King of Spain the miserable financial condition, and ask for a loan or a guarantee. John Jay was chosen minister, against Adams, who was afterwards chosen to negotiate a treaty of peace with England.

We now present a great part of the correspondence between Franklin, at Passy, and John Jay, and Carmichael his secretary, in Spain. It gives an interesting picture of the American legation at Madrid, as of the relations between France, Spain, and America.

Jay to Franklin.

CADIZ, 26 Jany. 1780.

DEAR SIR, — You have doubtless been amused this month or two past with various conjectures about the fate of the "Confederacy." She left Chester (on the Delaware) the 18th Oct., bound for France; was dismasted and split her rudder the 7th Nov. off the banks of Newfound-

land. On the 23d following, the officers of the ship being all of opinion that the condition of her rudder forbid our proceeding to Europe, we steered for Martinico; and arriving there the 18 Decr, we sailed from thence the 28th following in the "Aurora," and expected to have proceeded with her to Toulon; but on arriving here the 22 inst., we heard of the success of the Enemy in the Mediterranean, and of several cruisers near this coast whom we had fortunately escaped.

The further prosecution of my voyage having thus become improper, I gave notice of my appointment and arrival to Don Joseph de Galvez, the secretary of state for the department of the Indies, in a letter of which the enclosed, No. 1, is a copy; and also to Count de Vergennes, in a letter of which the enclosed, No. 2, is a copy. M. Carmichael is the bearer of the former, and M. Gérard will be so obliging as to take charge of the latter.

While at Martinico I drew a bill upon you for some seventy half-johans in favour of Mr. Bingham,[1] of which I gave advice by letter from thence, and enclosed a copy of the resolution of Congress which authorized that measure.

Although I had letters with me to gentlemen in other ports of Spain, yet it unluckily happened that I had none to any person here. You may imagine therefore that I was at first a little embarrassed on the article of money; but it gives me pleasure to inform you that the polite and unsolicited offers of Chevalier Roche and M. Penet, have made me easy on that head for the present. By their means I obtained 3,912 livres tournois from Messrs Quintinkeret and Compy, for a bill on you for 4,079 livres tournois,—that being, it seems, the difference of exchange.

[1] William Bingham was agent for the United States at Martinique.

The bill is dated the 25th inst., and is made payable at the expiration of sixty days from the date, which they tell me is the manner of drawing bills here.

American credit suffers exceedingly in this place from reports that our loan office bills payable in France have not been duly honored, but have been delayed payment upon various pretexts, one of which is that it was necessary for a whole set of bills to arrive before the money could be paid.

How far you may be in capacity to answer the demands made upon you, I cannot determine; but many considerations induce me to intreat you by all means punctually to pay the bill in question. Private honour forbids that these gentlemen should by an act of kindness to me expose their friends to inconveniences; and public credit demands that the reputation of Congress be not destroyed by the protest of bills drawn under their immediate authority for the necessary support of their servants; and I might also add that if this bill should fail, there will be an end put to my credit. On the consequences of such an event it is neither necessary or pleasant to dwell.

I have in my possession several letters, or rather packets, directed to you, and am much at a loss what to do with them. Be pleased to direct me. There are many things I wish to say to you, but you must, my dear sir, excuse my postponing them to another opportunity. I have been so confined since my arrival by preparing letters for Madrid, France, and America, that I have not yet been two hours out of my chamber.

God bless you, my dear sir, and long continue to you the blessing of health and cheerfulness.

P. S. Be pleased to present my compliments to Mr. Adams. I shall do myself the pleasure of writing to him

by the next opportunity. When we left Philadelphia, Mr. and Mrs. Bache, with their children (which are really fine ones), were in perfect health.

Carmichael to Franklin.

[Cadiz] 25 Jany, 1780.

Sir, — I have the honour of informing you of our arrival at this place this day in the Frigate "L'Aurore" from Martinico, to which island the officers of the "Confederacy" thought proper to proceed, in consequence of the loss of all our masts, and the damage our rudder received on the edge of the banks of Newfoundland.

We left Martinico the 28th of December, and have had a most agreeable passage, and most fortunately escaped the enemy, who are now superior on this coast. While in the West Indies we received no accounts from America, of what had passed since we left Philadelphia, but what were very confused. Admiral Arbuthnot, with six ships of war and sixteen regiments, arrived at Barbadoes the middle of December, so that the force of the enemy on the Continent cannot be very great. They had in those seas, when we quitted them, near thirty sail of the line and with the troops which arrived at Barbadoes were in condition to attempt the conquest of some of the Islands.

I should have thought myself happy in being in such a situation as to have profited daily by the experience which the world, even in your life time, allows you to possess; but unfortunately, circumstances, which I hope to have the honour of explaining to you in person, prevented it. I write at the same time to Dr. Bancroft, who will communicate in cypher anything that you may think improper to trust to the common conveyance. The honor which you have done me in writing to me while I was in

America induces me to hope that you will take me under your protection in Europe,[1] and from time to time, by letters, give me that advice and instruction which I wished to receive in person. I take the liberty of intreating you to mention me in such a manner to all those who do me the honour of remembering me, as a grateful mind would be solicitous to express. Your good host ought to be at the head of the list. Mr. Adams hath undoubtedly given you copies of all the public letters with which Mr. Jay is charged. Altho' I have not the honour of being personally known to the first mentioned gentleman, I shall be happy to cultivate that good understanding which the public interest would require, independant of the esteem which his character would entitle him. If my friend Billy has an inclination to visit Madrid, he will always find an apartment and a cordial acception.

P. S. I must beg you to be so obliging to forward a credit of two hundred pound sterling to me at Madrid, to the house in which M. Gardoqui is concerned. Our credit is so low here, from circumstances which I cannot explain, that I cannot negociate bills drawn for the interest of money borrowed in America and payable in Paris; which bills I bought at the same rate as those of French agent, Mr. Holker, were sold for.

If you cannot take the liberty of inclosing under cover to the French minister at Madrid, address me at the Post Office under the name of Monsr. Clement.

Franklin to Jay.

Passy, Feb. 22, 1780.

Sir, — It gave me infinite pleasure to hear of your excellency's safe arrival in Spain. Knowing that the "Con-

[1] Carmichael, it will be remembered, had been in Europe before, having been of use to the Commissioners on various occasions.

federacy" had sailed the 28th of October, we began to despair of ever hearing more of her. I received your advice of the bill drawn on me for four thousand and seventy nine livres tournois, at sixty days' date, which I ordered to be immediately paid as you desired.

I have lodged a credit for you at Madrid, for 24,000 livres, deducting this bill. You will be so good as to furnish Mr. Carmichael with 4,800 livres of it, which he has desired of me.

Inclosed is a letter of introduction to the Marquis d'Yranda, with whom the credit is placed, and whose acquaintance and friendship may be otherwise of use to you.

Franklin to Carmichael.

Passy, Feb. 22, 1780.

Dear Sir, — I received with great pleasure yours of the 25 January, and shall write to you fully by the first good opportunity.

I cannot recollect the name of the correspondent you mention, but have ordered a credit of 24,000 livres tournois to be lodged in Madrid for Mr. Jay and you, which, I suppose, you will divide in proportion to your appointments. Inclosed are the letters. I do not seal that for Mr. Jay, as I have just heard that possibly he may not be gone to Madrid, as I imagined, with M. Gérard, — and you may have occasion to show it to M. le Marquis D'Yranda.

Carmichael to Franklin.

Madrid, Feb. 19, 1780.

Sir, — I cannot let M. Gérard leave this without a letter for you, altho' probably he can give you much better information of the state of affairs here than it is

in my power to give. I did myself the honor of writing to you from Cadiz, and informed you of Mr. Jay's intentions of sending me to this city. A letter from himself, which M. Gérard will deliver, will inform you of the steps he hath taken with this court and that of Versailles. I can only add that the manner in which I have been received gives me great hopes that we shall not negotiate with this court at such a distance as we have hitherto done. I was presented, on Thursday last, to the Count of Florida Blanca [1] and Don Joseph de Galvez, and am to receive an answer to Mr Jay's letter on Monday next; in the meantime, I am at liberty to assure him that the King had ordered the Count de Florida Blanca to receive any overtures he had to make on the part of the United States. Some news which I have received here of the continued favorable dispositions of the Court of France give me great pleasure. I hope this Court will follow an example by which we profit so much. I have pitied your situation for some time past, exposed as you have been to so many imprudent demands, and to so many malevolent attacks. The news which I heard from France makes me hope that you will be as easy in that country as you have been invulnerable in America. In consequence of a resolve of Congress I beg you to procure me a credit here. I did not reflect that Congress could not by a fiat give a value to paper in Europe, when the miracle became contested in America. If, however, it can be done, it will be very agreeable, because it is necessary. We have no other news here than the departure of Rodney from

[1] Florida Blanca, the Spanish Minister, was not averse to the idea of a treaty. He would have given much could he have concluded one that should have redounded highly to his credit; and was therefore not likely to stickle on formalities if there were chance of accomplishing anything.

Gibraltar, — some call it an escape; you may give what sense you please to the word. I intreat you to remember me to Dr. Bancroft, to whom I have already written, and to your grandson.

MADRID, 13 March, 1780.

. . . I was informed that, altho' it did not suit the king's dignity or that of Congress that Mr. Jay should appear in his public character until the object of his mission and the interests of Spain had been fairly discussed and decided on, yet that we should be received and treated as strangers of distinction; and as such might appear at court. Accordingly, I have made use of that permission, and was present at the Besomanos on occasion of the birth of the prince, and ranged myself in the circle of foreign ministers. I have seen nothing but what appears to be reasonable in the conduct of the minister with whom I have had the honor to converse; yet I cannot help lamenting every circumstance which retards the business on which we are sent. . . .

MADRID, 29 Mar., 1780.

. . . I cannot help repeating the satisfaction I feel in the candid conduct of ministers of this court, which will enable M. Jay immediately on his arrival to enter upon the execution of the business on which he is sent. The court seems determined to prosecute the war and is taking measures to provide the funds necessary to support it. It appears to be, however, rather a war of the court than of the nation. There is reason to suspect that our enemies are not idle here, and that their communications pass by the way of Lisbon. Should you have an opportunity of obtaining any information on this head, M. Jay will be much obliged to you for it. . . .

Franklin to Carmichael.

Passy, March 31st, 1780.

Dear Sir, — I received by Mr. Gérard your kind letter written at Philadelphia. His safe return has given me great pleasure.

As soon as I received yours of Jan. 25 from Cadiz, I ordered a credit of 1000 louis d'or to be lodg'd for Mr. Jay and you, by Mr. Grand, with his banker at Madrid. He wrote by the next post. It does not appear by yours of March 13 that you had then been acquainted with this, or received my letter. This surprised me, and I enquired of Mr. Grand about it, who tells me that a letter from his correspondent, of March 12, mentions the receipt of the order; and he supposes that M. D'Yranda would soon find you out.

The Marquis de Lafayette is gone again to America. He took leave at Court in his American Uniform. He carries with him a warm heart for our Cause and Country. Dr. Bancroft is just returned here from L'Orient, where he has been to assist in getting one of our Frigates out, the "Alliance." He will probably write to you by the next post.

I thank you for your intelligence of Mr. Lee's philippics against me. Such they were intended. But when I consider him as the most malicious enemy I ever had (though without the smallest cause), that he shows so clearly his abundant desire to accuse and defame me, and that all his charges are so frivolous, so ill founded, and amount to so little, I esteem them rather as panegyrics upon me and satires against himself.

I am glad to understand by yours of Feb. 19 and Mar. 13 that you had met with so agreeable a reception at Madrid. The more so as I once imagined that the long delay of that Court in acceding to the Treaty had a dubious appear-

ance. Here I have every proof of the sincerest goodwill to us and our Cause. It is true I do not obtain all I have been directed to ask for. The Committee of Commerce sent me over an invoice of goods amounting, I guess, to more than twelve millions of livres. I have been obliged to abridge it greatly, the sum granted me not sufficing. I send, however, some of the most necessary articles, viz., 15,000 compleat dresses for soldiers, 15,000 new fusils, and 1,000 barrels of gunpowder. If Mr. Jay can obtain a sum from Spain, it may help to supply the deficiency. You have reason, as you say, to pity my situation. Too much is expected from me, and not only the Congress draws upon me, often unexpectedly, for large sums, but all the agents of the Committee of Commerce, in Europe and America, think they may do the same when pinch'd, alleging that it is necessary to the credit of the Congress that their particular credit should be supported. From the desire here of carrying on the War without levying new taxes, and the extraordinary expenses of the navy, so much money cannot be spared to us as is imagined in America; but essential aid will be given us this campaign, either by an actual junction of force or concert of operations in the United States, or by a powerful diversion in the West Indies, — a very considerable armament of ships and troops being on the point of departure for those countries.

Mr. Adams is at Paris, with Mr. Dana. We live upon good terms with each other, but he has never communicated anything of his business to me, and I have made no enquiries of him. Nor have I any letters from Congress explaining it. So that I am in utter ignorance. Indeed, the Congress seem very backward in writing to me. I have no answer to a long letter I wrote by the Chevalier de la Luzerne, nor even an acknowledgement that it came to hand; pray can you tell me the reason?

Friday, April 7. Having met with some interruption I did not finish my letter in time to go by the last post. Mr. Grand has since read me part of a letter from M. le Marquis D'Yranda in which he mentions his having seen you; and his willingness to serve Mr. Jay and you, but that you appeared somewhat reserved. We concluded that you had not received M. Grand's letter which went at the same time with mine (of which I enclose copies) because he had acquainted you with his having recommended you to the Marquis, and had given you such a character of him as would have induced you to have conversed freely with him.

Messrs. Lee and Izard are gone to L'Orient in order to embark in the "Alliance" together, but they did not travel together from hence. No soul regrets their departure; they separately came to take their leave of me, very respectfully offering their services to carry any despatches, &c. We parted civilly, for I have never acquainted them that I knew of their writing against me to Congress, but I did not give them the trouble of my despatches. Since Mr. Lee's being at L'Orient he has written to Mr. Grand requesting a certificate from him in contradiction to something you said of him in a paper delivered to Congress. I suppose Mr. Grand will explain this to you.

I retain my health *à merveille;* but what with bills of exchange, cruising ships, supplies, &c., besides the business of my station, I find I have too much to do. Your friend Billy (who presents his respects) is a great help to me, or I could not possibly go through with it.

Carmichael to Franklin.

MADRID, 22nd April, 1780.

DEAR SIR, — I have at length the pleasure of being relieved from much anxiety by the receipt of your letter of

the 31st of March and 7th of April. I endeavoured to recollect every circumstance of my conduct since I left France, and altho' I found in this scrutiny that I had left many things undone which I ought to have done, I brought myself in not guilty, biased perhaps by that sort of partiality we usually feel for ourselves. Your letters have undoubtedly met the fate of several addressed to me here by others, either under a fictitious or my real name. My impatience to hear from you hurried me to the post-office every day the courier arrived, and I carefully read the list of letters there, but M. Clement never made his appearance.

The Ct. de Montmorin soon after my arrival introduced me to the Marquis D'Yranda, who has been very polite to me, and to whom I am not otherwise reserved than in forbearing to go so often as he hath desired me. He informed me that he had received direction to supply M. Jay, but not mentioning my name, I was constrained to make use of other sources. I am afraid the gentlemen you mention left you with respect in their eyes and rancor in their hearts. If this should be the case I hope the fable of the Viper and the File will be renewed. I should be glad to know from M. Grand the nature of Mr. Lee's letter to him, because as the last-mentioned gentleman sometimes sees things in a different light from anyone else, it is not improbable that M. Grand may be led into some error. I have not with me a copy of the paper, which, in consequence of the request of many gentlemen in the House, I laid before Congress, but I recollect the substance of it, viz., that Mr. Lee has rendered himself disagreeable to the Court and individuals of the French nation, and even suspected by the former, and that I derived my knowledge of this from those who were connected with the Court, and named the Messrs. Grand on this occasion. This and

much more, M. Gérard and M. Holker confirmed by papers delivered either to Congress or members of that body, which, as that written by me, are in private journals or files of Congress.

I have heard with much satisfaction an account of the generous conduct which France continues to observe to us. Our necessities are certainly great, and our reliance on our ally is in proportion to these necessities.

I always wished to have it in my power to revisit France, and the obliging manner in which you express a desire to see me hath increased my wishes. Perhaps if your business should either advance rapidly or meet with unexpected delay, M. Jay may consent to spare me a few weeks, in which case I do assure you that I would most willingly ride post night and day. Several vessels have lately arrived from America in the ports of Spain, &c. I have not yet received Dr. Bancroft's letter. Pray present him my compliments, as also to Billy, whose copies set me an example I am afraid I shall never be able to imitate. M. and Mrs. Jay are neither in the best state of health. They desire me to make the proper compliments for them to you.

Jay to Franklin.

MADRID, 27 April, 1780.

DEAR SIR, — Your favour of the 7th inst., together with a duplicate of that of the 22d Febry. last, which I have never seen, are come to hand, and give me all that satisfaction which attends the removal of apprehensions of neglect from those we regard and esteem.

I am much obliged by the readiness with which my bills were accepted; and am happy to find that the reports respecting the fate of others are as false as they have been injurious. At Martinico the loan office bills sold at a

considerable discount; and indeed it was no easy matter to sell them at all. I shall take the earliest opportunity of setting them and others right about that matter.

On my return from Aranjuez, where I propose to go to-morrow, I shall transmit the papers you mention, with some others equally interesting. I can easily believe that your difficulties have been great and various. They were often the subject of conversation in America, and I am sure your friends as well as country will rejoice in the late important success of your negotiations. The French Court, by continuing steady and true to the object of their treaty with us, will obtain those [objects] which induced them to make it. Their conduct towards us hitherto has, I confess, attached me to the whole nation in a degree that I could not have thought myself capable of ten years ago.

In my opinion Britain is to be conquered in America, and that it would be more for the interest of her enemies to confine their offensive operations to that point, than enfeeble their efforts by attention to many lesser objects. Let America be supplied with money, clothes, and ammunition, and she will, by expelling her enemies and establishing her independence, do more essential injury to those imperious islanders than they have sustained for centuries.

I have sent the letters and packets I brought for you from America to Mr. Joshua Johnson at Nantes by M. Boutillier, a young gentleman of that place, and have desired Mr. Johnson to send them to you by the first safe conveyance.

What aids this Court may be pleased to afford us is not yet ascertained. I hope they will be such as may be proportionate to the common interests, their dignity, and our wants. The Minister, I am told, is able, and we know the

king is honest; on this ground I place much dependence, for I can hardly suppose that either of them will omit embracing this golden opportunity of acquiring glory to themselves, and honor and advantage to their nation, of completing the division and ruin of the British Empire; and that by measures which will in so great degree conciliate the affections as well as esteem of America.

Mrs. Jay has enjoyed more health within this fortnight than she has been blessed with for three months past. She presents her respects to you, and begs that your next letters to me may enclose for her one of the best prints of yourself, which we are told have been published in France, but are not yet to be had here.[1] I believe there is no man of your age in Europe so much a favourite with the ladies.

I am, dear sir, yours,

JOHN JAY.

P. S. I have not received letters to the Marquis D'Yranda, but have seen him, and given M. Carmichael an order on him for the sum you mention.

Carmichael to Franklin.

ARANJUEZ, May 22, 1780.

DEAR SIR, — I have deferred writing to you since my last of the 27th ulto. in hopes of profiting by the Ct. de Montmorin's courier; but as it is not certain when one will be despatched I venture to inform you by the ordinary post that Sir J. D.[2] presented a memorial to the Ct. de Florida Blanca, containing certain propositions tending to an accommodation of the present differences between the belligerent nations. On application to the Count de Vergennes, you will undoubtedly be furnished with a

[1] Franklin complied with this request.

[2] Sir John Dalrymple.

copy of his memorial, and from the perusal of it will be able to judge whether it doth not merit the derision with which it appears to have been received. The author is probably at Paris. I take the liberty of advising you that M. Jay means to transmit copies of it to Congress, which perhaps you may think proper to do.[1]

As the writer seems to found his hopes of success on your interference and wisdom, I leave him with pleasure in your hands. Considering all things, the operations for this campaign have been pushed with much vigour in this Country. I shall not mention American news, because I am informed that you have received much later advices than have reached us. You will oblige me very much by permitting my friend and namesake to copy a letter which you wrote to a lady of the Moulin Jolie.[2] Several people of distinction here are desirous of seeing it, and I own candidly that it will give me much pleasure to have this proof of your confidence. M. Jay and family are at Madrid, and therefore I cannot present to you those compliments on their part which I intreat you to make to those for me who do me the honour of remembering me. Yours, &c., &c.

Jay to Florida Blanca.[3]

19 June, 1780.

M. Jay presents his respectful compliments to his excellency the Count de Florida Blanca, and takes the

[1] Dr. SPARKS prints it in vol. viii. p. 547.

[2] Franklin, in reply to this, sends the letter (see SPARKS, ii. 177), and goes on: "The Moulin Joli is a little island in the Seine about two leagues hence, part of the country seat of another friend, where we visit every summer, and spend a day in the pleasing society of the ingenious, learned, and very polite persons who inhabit it."

[3] This brings up a subject which was perhaps the hardest the American Commissioners abroad had to handle. The Congress habitually drew bills

liberty of enclosing a copy of a note he has just received respecting a bill drawn upon him for 333 dollars. From this his Excellency will perceive the painful situation M. Jay is in. He forbears making any reflections on it, being persuaded that his Excellency's wisdom and liberality render them unnecessary.

Florida Blanca to Jay.

The Count de Florida Blanca will make no difficulty of paying the note of 333 dollars of which Mr. Jay makes mention in his note of yesterday, as much because it is for a sum of such small value as that he is pleased to be able to assist him in an extremity. But he must repeat to Mr. Jay that it will be impossible for him to have the same pleasure with regard to other sums without consulting the will of the king.

As the terms proposed up to the present moment have not been regarded as acceptable by Congress, others must be found; and Mr. Jay will of course consider it necessary to consider seriously that he may communicate to the Count de Florida Blanca all that his wisdom and his circumstances may suggest to him.

Aranjuez, 20th June.

In the midst of a business letter from Jay to Franklin, all about bills and so forth, we get this little bit, with its modest postscript: —

on their foreign representatives when they knew they had no balance of cash abroad, but hoped that their agents would be able to effect loans with either the French or Spanish governments which would enable them to meet the bills. They sent, *in theory*, American produce to Europe consigned to their agents, but practically these cargoes did not make a large stock to draw on. We shall meet later a good many letters which refer to this "drawing on the Bank of Hope," as Franklin termed it.

Mrs. Jay is much pleased with and thanks you for the print you were so kind as to send her. It is a striking likeness. I find that in France great men, like their predecessors of old, have their bards. Yours seem to have mounted high-mettled Pegasus, and to have been inspired (if Brydone's doctrine be right) by electricised muses.[1] Your strictures are just, tho' a little severe. While there are young Telemachuses and fascinating Calypsos in the world, fancies, and pens, and hearts will sometimes run riot, in spite of the Mentors now and then to be met with.

P. S. Mrs. Jay had a daughter born the 9 inst. They are both well. Benevolent minds enjoy events grateful to others; I cannot forbear telling you this little piece of news.

Brydone, alluded to above, had written books of travels and papers on electricity. He is the "reverend pilgrim" who receives immortality from Scott, in "Marmion."

Carmichael to Franklin.

St. Ildephonso, Aug. 12, 1780.

Dear Sir, — I did myself the honour of answering yours of the 17th of June,[2] by a courier from the French

[1] The allusion is probably to Turgot's line, —

Eripuit coelo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis.

Grimm gives the line of Turgot, without Turgot's name. He calls attention to a line in the *Anti-Lucrèce*, by Cardinal de Polignac, —

Eripuitque Jovi fulmen, Phoeboque sagittas.

This line was suggested by Manilius's line, —

Eripuitque Jovi fulmen viresque tonandi,
Et sonitum ventis concessit, nubibus ignem, —

the nominative being "docilis solertia," in a previous line.

There are two notes on the verse of Turgot, by Franklin and Nogaret, a French correspondent, in Sparks, viii. 537.

[2] Printed in Sparks, viii. 471. "Sir John Dalrymple," writes Franklin, "has been here some time, but I hear nothing of his political

ambassador, but not having the copy of my letter to you with me here, I cannot recollect the date. . . .

I have been assured by the gentlemen I mentioned to you in my last letter that no such manuscripts exist in the Escurial as those mentioned by Sir J. D. . . .

The print you sent to Mrs. Jay hath served to excite curiosity. I know no present that I can make to the princess de Masserano and several others that will be so agreeable. When we are in love with the talents and reputation of any one, we wish to know something of his physiognomy, and to have frequent occasions of contemplating it. If, therefore, my namesake will send me a few copies of the same print, he may command my services to procure him anything in a similar way in this country.

Jay to Franklin.

St. Ildefonso, 8 Sept. 1780.

Dear Sir, — My last to you went under cover to Mons. Grand from Madrid; I have not been favoured with any letters from you since the one inclosing a letter of credit in my favor from M. Grand to M. d'Yranda.

M. Deane has been long advised, and I have not yet received a letter from him. I cannot account for this. Intelligence from America might have been useful. I have received but one, and that an unimportant public letter, since I left Philadelphia; you cannot conceive how

operations. The learned talk of the discovery he has made in the Escurial Library, of Forty Epistles of Brutus, a missing part of Tacitus, and a piece of Seneca, that have never yet been printed. He has not been with me, and I am told by one of his friends that though he wished to see me, he did not think it prudent. So I suppose I shall have no communication with him, for I shall not seek it. As Count de Vergennes has mentioned nothing to me of any memorial from him, I suppose he has not presented it, — perhaps discouraged by the reception it met with in Spain. So I wish, for curiosity's sake, you would send me a copy of it."

little information and how few letters reach me from our country. Whenever you write to me, send your letters either to the French Ambassador or under cover of M. d'Yranda. The post is the most precarious of all conveniences. No letters suspected to be for or from me pass safely by it; many are suppressed, and the remainder inspected.

Our affairs go on heavily. The treaty is impeded by the affair of the Mississippi,[1] and the fate of my bills is not yet decided. I have been permitted, indeed, [to accept] to the amount of about 14,000, and this circumstance gives me more hopes for the rest than anything else. The fact is, there is little coin in Egypt. This *entre nous.*

Cumberland is still here; his hopes and fears are secret. He went from hence a few days ago, and is soon expected back again; to what policy are we to ascribe this? I am told we have nothing to fear. It may be so, but my faith is seldom very exclusive. If we have nothing else to fear, we have always danger to apprehend from such a spy, so situated, so surrounded by inquisitive, communicative, and some say, friendly Irishmen. In short, I wish you could hear me think. But that, like most other wishes, is vain, and I must leave time to inform you of many things which at present must not be written. Be so kind as to deliver the enclosed letters.

Jay to Franklin.

St. Ildefonso, 22 Sept. 1780.

Dear Sir, — I have lately written to you several letters Enclosed is a copy of one to Count de Vergennes,[2] which

[1] The Spaniards desired to insist on retaining the sole right to the navigation of the Mississippi.

[2] In the letter to Vergennes, which seems too long to print, Jay states the facts of his negotiations in regard to money, and asks if France cannot

Count de Montmorin, who also writes to him on the same subject, is so obliging as to send together with this, by a courier to Bayonne. The papers you have heretofore recd from me, with those now sent, will enable you to understand it; and I am persuaded your abilities and influence will be exerted to promote the success of the application contained in it. It appears to me absolutely necessary that the bills drawn on me[1] be saved at all events. If, contrary to my ideas of the wisdom and affection of France, she should not lend us money for the purpose, we must endeavour to borrow it of individuals, tho at a higher than usual interest, — nay, on any terms rather than not get it. Almost anything will be better than a protest; for, exclusive of disgrace, which is intolerable, the consequences of it would cost Congress more than the expense of saving their credit, be it what it will.

Jay to Franklin.

MADRID, 5 Oct. 1780.

DEAR SIR, — Although you have not informed me that you had recd. my letter from St. Ildefonso, yet I find it has not only come safe to your hands, but that Mr. Grand (to whom I wrote a few lines by last post) is actually engaged in obtaining the object of it. I thank you for this in both the capacities of American and friend. How far the responsibility of the King of Spain may be a means of opening the chests of your money holders, I know not; but that nothing on my part might be wanting, I applied

assist him in paying these bills. The King of Spain has guaranteed the payment of some; will the King of France guarantee the payment of the rest? In reply Vergennes wrote that he feared nothing could be done, that the King's resources were strained, that he was at that moment lending a million to the United States through Franklin.

[1] By Congress.

lately to be furnished with some evidence of it, and to be informed of the manner in which it should be given.[1]

The answer was that proper instructions on this head should be sent to the Spanish Ambassadors in France and Holland, and that they would on application give this responsibility in due form to such persons as might consent to lend money on the credit of it in those countries, and that the Ministry would do the same there with respect to those in Spain. By this opportunity I ought to add nothing further than that I am your affect. friend, &c.

P. S. I have received Mr. Deane's two last letters and written him two others. If the paper he sent by the courier in August be the original, he has in my opinion cut his business short, for to this day all my inquiries about it have proved fruitless.

Franklin to Adams.

Passy, 20 Oct. 1780.

Sir, — Understanding that in case of M. Lawrence's absence, you are charged with the affairs of procuring a loan in Holland, I think it right to acquaint you that by a letter from Mr. Jay, on the 12th inst., from Madrid, we are informed that the King of Spain has been so good as to offer his guarantee for the payment of the interest and principal of a loan of money for the use of the United States. Mr. Grand thinks that no considerable use can be made here of that guarantee on account of the considerable loan M. Necker is about to make, but that possibly it may have weight in Holland. Orders will be sent to the Spanish Ambassador here by the next post, respecting this matter.

[1] The King had offered his responsibility to facilitate a loan for $150,000 for three years. See Jay's letter to the President of Congress, Dipl. Corr. vii. 300.

I regret much the taking of Mr. Lawrens. His son, I understand, sailed a fortnight after him for France; but he has not yet arrived.

The "Ariel" has been at sea, but meeting with a terrible storm which carried away all her masts has returned to port to refit.

P. S. By a former letter from M. Jay, I find the sum to be one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for which the King of Spain would be answerable, payable in the space of three years.

Adams to Franklin.

AMSTERDAM, Oct 24, 1780.

SIR, — I have this moment the honour of your letter of the twentyeth of this month and it is as cold water to a thirsty soul.

I have been busily employed in making enquiries, in forming acquaintances and in taking advice. In hopes of Mr. Laurens's arrival, and wishing him to judge for himself, I have not decided upon some questions that necessarily arise. I am not able to promise anything, but I am led to hope for something. The contents of Mr. Jay's letter will certainly be of great weight and use. I am assured of the good will of a number of very worthy and considerable people, and that they will endeavour to assist a loan.

Let me intreat your Excellency to communicate to me everything you may further learn respecting the benevolent intentions of the Court of Madrid respecting this matter. I will do myself the honour to acquaint you with the progress I make. I was before in hopes of assisting you somewhat, and your letter has raised those hopes a great deal, for the English credit certainly staggers here a little.

The treatment of Mr. Laurens is truly affecting. It will

make a deep and lasting impression on the minds of the Americans, but this will not be a present relief to him. You are no doubt minutely informed of his ill usage. Can anything be done in Europe for his comfort or relief?

I have the honour to be, with respectful compliments to all friends, sir, your most obedient servant,[1]

JOHN ADAMS.

Jay to Franklin.

MADRID, 25 Oct. 1780.

DEAR SIR, — Your very agreeable and friendly letters I have recd, and shall take an early opportunity of answering fully. I have no reason as yet to think a loan here will be practicable. Bills on me arrive daily. Be pleased to send me a credit for residue of our salaries. America rises in the general estimation here.

Tell Mr. Deane I have recd. four of his letters and written three to him. He may expect to hear from me again soon.

Prince Masserano sets out for France early in the morning. I had intended to devote this afternoon and evening to writing by him, but have been prevented by company. It is now late at night, and I can say little. I am much indebted to the politeness of this nobleman, and except at his table, have eaten no Spanish bread that I have not paid for since my arrival in this city. This circumstance will, I flatter myself, recommend him to your particular attention, which I have reason to think would be very acceptable, for the respect and esteem which he frequently expresses for you. The Duke of Crillon who accompanies the Prince has also been polite to us, and I fancy they will both receive pleasure from finding me sensible of their attentions. The Princess appears to me to have

[1] See Dipl. Corr. v. 365.

much merit. I regret her absence, and the more so, perhaps, as it will not be supplied. She is a lady of much observation and discernment. God bless you, my dear sir.

Jay to Franklin.

MADRID, 30 Oct. 1780.

DEAR SIR, — The pleasure given me by your letter of the 2d instant may more easily be conceived than expressed. I am greatly obliged by your attention to my embarrassments. In my last on that subject which you received was a copy of my letter to Count de Vergennes, from which it appeared that the sum I should have occasion for would probably be considerable, and far exceed 25,000 dollars. Bills to the amount of 100,000 dollars have arrived. A loan cannot be effected here. What the Count will do is as yet uncertain, and may long continue so. I should have replied to your letter before, but as I daily expected to hear from Count de Vergennes, I waited, with a view of mentioning the import to you. The inclosed copy of a note I received from Count Montmorin contains all the advice I have on that head. My situation continues unpleasant, and though my endeavours are not wanting to better it, future events are far too uncertain to be relied upon. To be active, prudent and patient, is in my power, but whether I shall reap, as well as sow and water, God only knows.

I have often been told of the former supplies and asked how they were to be reimbursed. My answer has uniformly been that I knew neither the amount or terms and that I wished to be furnished with an account of both, &c. As yet, I have not been able to obtain it.

Some mistake must have given occasion to any of the bills drawn on me being returned without acceptance.

The fact is that though I often delayed, with consent of the holders, yet I never refused to accept any of them.

I have written several letters to Congress requesting them to forbear drawing further bills till proper funds should be established for their payment. Mere contingent assurances, or flattering inferences drawn from flattering expressions, ought never to be considered as a sufficient foundation for such serious measures.

Cornwallis, it seems, has cropt some of Gates's laurels, and Mr. Laurens is in the Tower. European politicians will, I suppose, tho' often deceived in the same way, again think America on her knees in the dust. Had Ternay[1] been supported, the campaign would have had a different termination. Much money and spirit has been wasted by this disappointment. Of the latter, indeed, we shall never be in want, and I should be happy if the like could be said of the former.

The conduct of France towards us has been friendly, and though I cannot forbear to think she has been too inattentive to this object, my gratitude towards her is not impaired by it. I regret it as a misfortune, not blame it as a designed omission. I wrote to you last week, and now inclose a duplicate of another letter. You may rely on my reimbursing you the advances on account of our salaries, out of the first remittances I receive.

I have often congratulated my country and myself on your being at present in France. I once expected to have seen you there, and to have profited by the lessons which time and much experience have brought you. Miracles have ceased, and my constitution does not promise length of days, or I should probably desire you when you ascend to drop me your mantle. That you may long retain it, is one of the prayers of, &c.

[1] The Chevalier de Ternay was a French naval officer.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE MADRID CORRESPONDENCE. — 1781.

Franklin to Carmichael.

PASSY, Jan. 27, 1781.

DEAR SIR, — I have before me your favours of Oct. 25, Nov. 5, and Dec. 21. I do not know whether the Duke de Crillon whom you recommend is come to Paris. That letter came while I was ill, and I have not since heard anything of him; but I will enquire for him of the Prince, to whom it was not till yesterday that I was able to pay my respects, and to thank the Princess for their civilities to my compatriots at Madrid. You desire, as she had not the print she requested, that I should show her the original *to advantage*. It happened unluckily otherwise, for by the mistake of my man, who, it seems, had enquired for the Princess instead of the Prince, I was shown into a dressing-room where a lady was at her toilet; and not knowing at first who it was, and expecting the Prince, I was a little puzzled till he came. They speak of you with great regard.

I wish to know whether the clothing you mention in yours of Nov. 5 is gone, and what the quantity. When I heard of the taking of clothing for 15,000 men by the combined fleet, from the English, I thought our friends had a fine opportunity of supplying our wants in an essential not immediately necessary to themselves; I hope it was

all sent to America. Reports are just now spread here,[1] but I do not learn how they came, that M. Galvez has succeeded at Pensacola. This gives me the more pleasure, as when Spain has done her own business, in recovering Florida, she may perhaps think of helping us to recover Georgia and Carolina. But I own, too, that my expectations of great aids from that nation are not much stronger than yours. As yet they know us too little, and are jealous of us too much. Their long delay in entering into treaty with us, in pursuance of the secret article, is to me a mark of their not being very fond of a connection with us; in which I think they much mistake their true interest, and neglect securing great and permanent advantages to their country.

I thank you for your information relating to the batteries opened against me in America. I since hear that a motion has been made in Congress by a Carolina member for recalling me, but without success; and that A. Lee has printed a pamphlet against me. If my enemies would have a little patience they may soon see me removed without their giving themselves any trouble, as I am now 75. I know not what they can mean by saying that I opposed the settling of Mr. Deane's accts. I have no interest to induce such opposition, and no opposition has been made. The Congress appointed Mr. Johnson of Nantes to audit them. He refused the service, and Mr. Deane was till very lately absent.

I am glad you have met with such civility from the Marquis d'Yranda. From the character Mr. Grand gave me of him, I wish both you and Mr. Jay may cultivate his friendship. He has conceived that Mr. Jay is too reserved towards him. *Qu'il parait toujours fort boutonné*, was, I think, the expression in a letter Mr. Grand read to

[1] These reports were true. See BRYANT and GAY, iv. 7.

me. Tho' I did not sooner answer Mr. Jay's and your letters relating to your appointments, I took care immediately to order the credit desired, and I have since accepted the bill you mention; so that I hope you are now easy as to your particular affairs, which I wish you may always be, enjoying withal every other kind of happiness.

P. S. As I read Spanish a little, I wish you would send me the Gazette of Madrid by the court couriers, and any new pamphlets that are curious. There is also a book that I desire to have, but it being in two volumes folio, you cannot easily find an opportunity of sending it. It is the *Bibliotheca Hispana Nicolai Antoni.*

Jay to Franklin.

MADRID, 21 Febry, 1781.

DEAR SIR, — Your favour of the 15 ult. with the packets mentioned in it arrived in good order. I regret your long silence, though I am strongly tempted to rejoice in the cause of it. A fit of the gout, it is said, often prolongs life.

Affairs here begin to wear a better aspect. I have been promised three millions of reals, that is, one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, which, though very inadequate to the demands upon me, is still a great consolation, especially as men who are at the pains of planting and watering trees, seldom let them perish for want of a few drops extraordinary.

A few days after the date of my last, the Marquis d'Yranda, without my request, sent me the amount of your credit on him for the balance of our last year's salaries. I thank you for accepting my last bill. As yet no letters from Congress later than October have reached me; nor do I hear anything of remittances, about which I am the more anxious, as I wish to replace the sums you have

been so kind as to advance me, and to avoid similar applications in future. It is hard to be constrained to press one's friends for aids which it may be inconvenient to them to afford; such, however, has been and still is my case. I scarcely know how to desire you to make further advances on account of our salaries (four months of which is now due), and yet I find myself under a necessity of doing it. My expenses here, notwithstanding the most rigid œconomy, are very great. . . .

Ever since my arrival I have been particularly cautious to avoid offending any person, of any rank, and to endeavour to please all without becoming the property or sycophant of any. My disagreeable situation was not unknown to him,[1] but the inferences he drew from it proved fallacious. I never find myself less disposed to humility or improper compliances than when fortune frowns. I have uniformly been very civil, though not confidential towards the Marquis, nor has anything harsh ever passed between us. He is a man of business, abilities, and observation (and what is of much importance here) of money. He keeps the most, and indeed the only, hospitable house here, and persons of the first rank and fashion are found at his table. His consequence at court is unequal to his desires, and, I think, to his capacity of being useful. In a word, he had a good share of sagacity, ambition, and pride. I think it probable that we shall be yet on more familiar terms, for though I will never court, yet I shall with pleasure cultivate his acquaintance.

Carmichael to Franklin.

MADRID, 28 February, 1781.

DEAR SIR, — The Prince Maceran's courier brought me your favour of the 27th ulto. I am so sensible of the

[1] Jay has been speaking of the Marquis d'Yranda.

honour and pleasure of your correspondence not to regret it.[1] Yet when I tell you with sincerity that every letter which I receive from you adds to my desire of meriting your esteem, and consequently that of others, you will not, I hope, think your indulgence thrown away upon me. I am much pleased that you have seen the Prince and Princess of Maceran. They were extremely kind to me, and their notice was productive of that of others, as well natives as foreigners of distinction. The manner in which, you inform me, they are pleased to speak of me is so far flattering as it will convince you that I was neither wanting in sensibility or attentions in return for this notice. I think I know so well the characters of your enemies — and indeed I may venture to call them the enemies of their country — that I cannot well be deceived in their plan of operations. A. Lee is to reside at Philadelphia this winter; his pamphlet, altho' I have never seen it, is, as I judge, a prelude of that he means to prosecute, by a thousand hints and insinuations, to new Members of Congress to wound your reputation. His brother, R. Henry, is endeavoring by indefatigable pains and a consummate hypocrisy to recover his consequence in the State of Virginia; there is a change in the delegation of the Province of Maryland favourable to their projects. In Massachusetts, S. A. and some others have relinquished all apparent power in the State to preserve it in Congress.

In N. Hampshire new members are introduced, one of whom quitted the army for this purpose, and is strongly united to the party which opposes General Washington, yourself, and, I may say, the liberal men of the Continent. They will work underground until they think the time ripe for the denouement of the plot. Will you permit me to tell you that frequent letters from you to Congress will

[1] The sense is imperfectly expressed.

blast all these fine-spun clash and malicious schemes, which, if successful, must ultimately tend to the destruction of the confidence that our friends in Europe have still in us. A part of the articles mentioned in my letter of the 5th of November is shipped, but not having yet received the invoices, I cannot precisely tell the amount, &c. . . .

I have enquired for the Biblioteca Hispania you mention. It is very rare, and I am asked 22 pistoles for the only copy I have found, in 4, and not 2 volumes folio, as mentioned by you. It will be very easy for me to execute your orders respecting curious pamphlets, for I have as yet seen none; this is not a mushroom soil for brochures. . . .

P. S. March 10th. The Embassador not having despatched his courier at the time I wrote the above, I have kept it, in preference to trusting it to the ordinary conveyance. I have received a letter from Ellbridge Gerry, dated at Marble Head, which gives me a very agreeable account of the situation of our affairs. His letter is of the 10th of Jan'y. The Boston papers of the 18th of the same month destroy the hopes our enemies entertained in consequence of Rivington's long account of the revolt and dissatisfaction of part of the Continental Army.

Jay to Franklin.

MADRID, 1st Apr. 1781.

DEAR SIR, — Notwithstanding my repeated and warmest applications to the Count de Florida Blanca, I have as yet been able to obtain only 24,880 dollars of the 150,000 expressly promised in December last. He has, on the contrary, assured me that this promise could not be complied with in less than six months; it therefore became neces-

sary to communicate my embarrassments to the Embassador of France, and to request his friendly aid and interposition. You will perceive by the inclosed account that the bills I have accepted and which still remain to be paid (exclusive of those at two months sight, for the payment of which you authorized me to draw upon you) amount to 231,303, of which

89,083 will be payable this month,
96,288 in May,
18,027 in June,
9,025 in July,
15,086 in August,
3,794 in September.
231,303

The Embassador was very sensible of the pernicious consequences which would follow a protest of these bills, and I must do him the justice to say, interested himself warmly in endeavouring to extricate me from that necessity. He has had different conferences with the Count de Florida Blanca on the subject, and yesterday he promised the Embassador positively to pay the 89,083 dollars which will be due in April in the course of six months, in six equal payments, reckoning from next May; but as this money still left me without relief as to the April bills, he engaged the Marquis d'Yranda to advance the sums necessary to pay them, and which I shall accordingly receive from him. Thus, my dear sir, I have been, as it were, reprieved, by the kind offices of the French Embassador, from the necessity of protesting any of the bills due this month. But every ensuing month will bring with it new danger and solicitudes, and particularly the month of May, in the course of which I shall be called upon for no less than 96,288 dollars; I am in a cruel

situation, and without the least expectation of succour except from France.

I therefore think it necessary to inform you of the delicate state of our affairs here, by express, and to intreat you to use your utmost endeavours to provide me by his return with funds adequate to the bills accepted, which at present amount to 142,220, without including either those which may yet arrive or the 89,083 due this month, and for the payment of which I expect to reimburse the Marquis d'Yranda with the money promised by the Minister on the monthly payments before mentioned. The Marquis d'Yranda, whom I saw yesterday at the French Embassador's, has further agreed, at the Embassador's request, to furnish me with the further sum of 142,220 doll. as I shall have occasion for it, provided Mr. Grand will accept his drafts to that amount. It is therefore of the last importance that arrangements for this purpose be immediately taken with that gentleman, and that I receive by the return of the express his order on the Marquis to furnish me at least with the sum of 142,220 dollars, without which it will be impossible for me to pay these bills. The Ambassador will also write by this courier, and I have little doubt but that your Court will generously interpose on this as they have on several occasions, to prevent events prejudicial to America in particular and the common cause in general. I am also constrained to add that our situation here is daily becoming more disagreeable from the want of our salaries; to be obliged to contract debts and live on credit is terrible. I have not to this day received a shilling from America, and we should indeed have been greatly distressed had it not have been for your good offices. Endeavour, I beseech you, to provide us with supplies on this account, and deliver me if possible from the many disagreeable sensations which such a variety of

unpleasant circumstances naturally create. Remember that new bills are still arriving. Be pleased to communicate this letter to Mr. Laurens, who I am persuaded will cheerfully afford you all the aid in his power. I have directed the courier to wait your orders, and then to return without further delay.

P. S. You will perceive from the inclosed account that I shall be under the necessity of drawing upon you for 10 or 1200 dollars on account of the 25,000 before it will be possible to hear from you on the subject.

I have requested the favour of your grandson to execute some little commissions for me, and you will oblige me by furnishing him with money for the purpose.

Franklin to Jay.

Passy, April 12, 1781.

Dear Sir, — I have before me the several letters you have honoured me with, dated Feb. 21, March 11, and April 1.

I was much pleased to learn that you have obtained a promise for 150,000 dollars; your reflection on the consequence is just. As this sum must be used in payment of the bills drawn upon you, and probably no part of it can be applied to your subsistance, I desire that you would draw upon me for half a year of your salaries, at 30 days' sight; and for the future, while I stay here, draw quarterly, until you receive remittances or can obtain a disposable grant or loan. I mention this the first thing in my letter, to make you as soon as possible easy on that head.

I thank you for showing me the copy of the resolution relating to the Empress of Russia, tho' I had before received it, and it was already communicated to her Impe-

rial Majesty, who I am informed is much pleased with it. Mr. Dana, lately secretary to Mr. Adams, has received a commission appointing him minister to that Court. He is on his way thither incog., and proposes to appear in that country merely as a traveller, till a proper time may arrive for avowing his character. So you will please not to mention it. Mr. Adams has, I believe, received a commission lately to supply the place of Mr. Laurens in Holland. I know not whether he has yet declared it. He has some time since opened a loan there, at the house of Neufville for two millions of florins, — about 4 millions of livres; I have not heard with what success, but hope it will fill.

I have always found Mr. Grand here an able and hearty friend in our affairs. I am therefore glad that you are becoming better acquainted with his friend at Madrid, as together they may on many occasions be more serviceable to us.

I thank you for communicating to me the letter of the Secretary of Congress, on our finances. It gives light which I had not before, and may be useful here.

Negotiations for peace are talked of. You will see all I know of them in a letter of mine to Congress, which I leave open for your perusal, and desire you to forward with your next despatches.[1] I give you the opportunity of perusing that letter for another reason: I have in it desired a dismission from the service, in consideration of my age, &c. And I wish you to succeed me here. No copy of the letter is yet gone from France, and possibly this which I send you may arrive first; nor have I mentioned my intention to anyone here: if therefore the change would be agreeable to you, you may write to your friends in Congress accordingly. This thought occurred to me on

[1] This letter was dated March 12, 1781. See SPARKS, ix. 1.

hearing from the Princess Masserano, that you and Mrs. Jay did not pass your time agreeable there; and I think you would find this people of a more sociable turn, besides that I could put you immediately into the society I enjoy here, of a set of very amiable friends. In this case Mr. Carmichael might succeed you in Spain. I purpose to recommend these changes myself in another letter.

Your express arrived here on Sunday last at 3 o'clock. I communicated your letter that evening to Mr. Laurens. We agreed in the necessity of supporting the credit of Congress by paying the bills, tho' his zeal for supplying the army made him feel a reluctance in diminishing the 6 millions of livres I had lately granted for that purpose, and which was either to be laid out in clothing, &c., here, or drawn for by General Washington, as you will see by my letter to Congress. I have myself experienced too much of the distressed situation you are in not to pity you most sincerely; I have, therefore, this day authorized Mr. Grand, in writing, to pay the bills of the Marquis D'Yranda that may be drawn to furnish you with the sum of 140,220 dollars. I confide that these drafts will not come but by degrees, as the occasion calls, from your acceptances between May and September, — my receipts of money being gradual; and it may be depended on that the bills will be duly honoured.

Mr. Laurens is worrying the ministers for more money, and we shall, I believe, obtain a farther sum. But the necessary supplies of military stores will demand all, and more than we shall get; I hope, therefore, that you will not relax in your applications for aids from Spain, on account of the sums to be furnished you by me, since it will be hardly possible for me to assist you farther. My grandson will execute with pleasure your commissions. Present my respectful compliments to Mrs. Jay.

P. S. I inclose you copies of a number of letters lately taken and brought in here. I wish you could send copies of them by different conveyances, as the contents of some are important.

Franklin to Jay.

Passy, June 30, 1781.

Sir, — You acquaint me that bills have appeared, drawn on you in March last, and ask very properly if this can be reconciled to the obvious dictates of prudence and policy. It cannot. And if you are unable to pay them, they must be protested; for it will not be in my power to help you. And I see that nothing will cure the Congress of this madness of drawing upon the Pump at Aldgate, but such a proof that its well has a bottom.

Jay to Franklin.

Madrid, 13 July, 1781.

Dear Sir, — I have received your favour respecting the Pump at Aldgate.

I have since (two days ago) received letters from Congress assuring me that no further bills shall be drawn upon me.

These despatches have given me so much business that I am obliged to desire Mr. Carmichael to write you the news, and to assure you without further addition to this letter, that I am most sincerely, your aff. obliged friend and servant.

Jay to Franklin.

July [?], 1781.

. . . I cannot forbear considering the approaching winter as a very critical season. It is said that Russia and the Emperor have offered their mediation, and that it will

be accepted. It is further said that France wishes for peace. For my own part I fear that France has very little to expect from the friendship of these mediators, and unless appearances deceive me, every nation in Europe, except Prussia, wish better to England than to France. It appears to me expedient to delay the progress of this mediation, and in the meantime to endeavour strenuously to form a close defensive alliance between France, Spain, Holland, and America. If France and Spain could be prevailed upon to adopt this idea *speedily* and heartily, I am persuaded that the Dutch might, in their present temper, and to obtain certain guarantees, easily be brought into the measure. Such a quadruple alliance, followed by a vigorous campaign, could give us a peace worth our acceptance. As to the present campaign, I do not expect great things from it. My expectations from the expedition against New York are far from sanguine.

I wish to see some great stroke struck, some great plan wisely concerted, and vigorously executed. Had a French fleet of decided superiority to the enemy, been on our coast early in the spring, and co-operated with General Washington thro'out the summer, Halifax, New York, and Charlestown would before winter have changed masters, and then we should have been ripe for peace.

As to this Court, I do not apprehend that they are tired of the war, or that they have the least objection to another campaign. They want Jamaica, they want Gibraltar, and Mahon would be a trump card in their hands. If their activity was equal to their perseverance, and they possessed the talent of drawing forth and using all their resources, they would be very formidable. But take Spain as she is. If she could once be prevailed upon to pass the Rubicon, that is, to acknowledge and engage to support our independence, she would give Great Britain a

mortal wound, and render essential service to the common cause. How far France views the affair in the same light I know not, nor can I clearly comprehend the policy of the system she seems to hold relative to it.

The Embassador is well attached to the American cause, and [holds] such proper views of its importance, as well as the manner of supporting it, that I have often wished him at Versailles. There is, nevertheless, a sort of mysterious reserve about him upon this subject; nor am I informed whether any, and what steps have been taken by him and his Court to influence Spain to an alliance with us. I have, however, full confidence in the friendship of France, and the late aids she has granted to America give us reason to rely on the King and his principal ministers.

There is some reason to hope that this Court begins to think more seriously of a treaty with us than heretofore. A few weeks will enable me to judge better of their views. In politics I depend upon nothing but facts, and therefore never risque deceiving myself or others by a reliance on professions which may or may not be sincere.

The Duke of Crillon is still at sea.[1] I am tempted to wish that expedition had not been undertaken. If it fails it will do harm, and I see but little prospect of its succeeding. . . . As I have reason to think this letter will go unopened to your hands, I have written with less reserve than usual.

Franklin to Jay.

Passy, Aug. 20, 1781.

Dear Sir, — I have before me several of your late letters, which, though not formally, have been substantially answered, by the payment of your bills.

[1] The allusion is to the attack on Minorca, which succeeded the next winter. Crillon was made Duke of Mahon.

I got our banker to examine the Marquis's account, who explained it to me, and satisfied me that it was right. There are intricacies in the affair of exchange which neither you nor I well understand, and we are therefore under necessity of placing confidence somewhere. If you are still in doubt about any particular, I will get him to give me his explanation in writing, and send it to you.

We have for convenience in accounts, generally reckoned louis as pounds sterling, the difference being a trifle. It is, however small, against the Congress, and therefore what we have no right to from their expressed allowance. At the final settlement of our accounts, it will be easy to give Congress credit in one article, thus, *for the difference between louis received and pounds sterling at — p louis* on pounds sterling. In truth, I do not exactly know what the difference is, and I am told it varies with the exchange.

I have taken to my account the fifty louis you left in my hands. My grandson, I suppose, informs you what he has expended by your orders.

In yours of the 31 of May, you complain of the want of regular intelligence. I sympathize because I suffer with you. I receive indeed, a number of letters from Mr. Lovell, but they are very short, and mostly to acquaint me that he cannot write fully, because the Committee of Correspondence are not easily got together. To many of my letters I have never received any answer. The Congress have wisely put their finances into the hands of one intelligent person; I wish they would do the same with their correspondence, by appointing a single secretary for foreign affairs. I know nothing of what passes in America, but what I learn from their newspapers or the English, or from the ministers here, who are more early informed

than I am, even of what relates to myself; and it was from M. de Vergennes that I first learned the Congress had refused to grant my request for dismission from their service.[1]

In yours of May 31, you informed me that bills upon you had lately arrived, dated in March, and I answered that if you could not pay them they must be protested, as it would not be in my power to help you. I had not then time to give you the reasons, which are, that this Court, being fatigued and displeased by my repeated applications for more money, to pay new and unexpected demands of bills, drawn not only on me, but on you, and Mr. Laurens, and Mr. Adams, &c., had ordered their minister at Philadelphia to remonstrate against this irregular proceeding, and the Congress had promised him not to draw any more. This was, I think, in March, and on being helped out of my last difficulty, I have promised M. de Vergennes not to accept any bills drawn on me after the first of April, if such there should be. And he has acquainted me explicitly that if I do accept such bills, I am not to expect any assistance from him towards paying him. . . .

I have just received a Commission joining yourself, Mr. President Laurence, Govr. Jefferson, and me, with Mr. Adams, and directing us to repair to such place[2] as may be appointed, for conferences upon peace, and to negotiate and agree upon the terms in behalf of the Congress; also

[1] The letter of Huntington, the President of Congress, announcing this refusal to Franklin, was dated June 19, in answer to his of March 12. — Dip. Corr., iii. 220.

[2] It was not until the next summer, after the North Ministry had fallen in England, that Franklin, Jay, and Adams met at Paris, to negotiate the treaty of peace. Laurens only reached Paris in time to sign the preliminary articles. Jefferson remained throughout in America.

another commission, empowering us to accept in behalf of Congress the mediation of the Emperor of Germany and Empress of Russia. These commissions are accompanied by a set of instructions. If you have not received the same let me know, and I will send a courier with copies, though the occasion does not at present seem pressing.

Franklin to Jay.

VERSAILLES, Sept. 4, 1781.

DEAR SIR, — I received a few days since a very obliging letter from you. I have it not with me here, and therefore cannot mention the date. I shall answer it particularly by the next opportunity. This serves chiefly to cover the communication of two letters which I have received, one from Mr. Adams, relative to the proposed mediation, the other from some merchants who possess Congress drafts of a late date. I have declared my opinion of those drawn on Mr. Laurens, that we have nothing to do with them, and that I can give no expectations of their being paid. I believe I sent you a copy of M. le Comte de Vergennes's letter, in which I am explicitly told that I shall not be assisted to pay any drafts made after the 1st of April. You will see that the promise of drawing no more upon you has not been kept, and you will judge for yourself whether it will be right for you to accept these new bills; but I ought to acquaint you that I see no prospect at present of my being able to help you in paying them. I just now hear that Mr. Adams is very ill. I think it would be of service if you and I could meet. Cannot you make a trip to Paris, or will you meet me at Bordeaux? Mr. Laurens is not likely to be at liberty to join us, and it is perhaps a question whether Mr. Jefferson will cross the seas, — he refused the appointment of com-

ing with me, — and I shall not wonder if Mr. Adams should return before the treaty commences; in which case the business will rest much with us two. I have many reasons for desiring to converse with you, besides the pleasure it would give me.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE YEAR OF YORKTOWN.

AS the year 1781 begins, which was, practically, to close the contest in America, we have such a journal as Franklin kept admirably well, — enough to show the nature of his daily life, and enough to make us regret that there is no more. But with him, alas, as with all other men in affairs, the great rule of journal-writing applied which John Adams laid down so well, — that one keeps a journal when he has little or nothing to tell; and when one has much to do and to tell, he has no time for his journal.

The indorsement on this manuscript, which has never been printed till now, is simply

Part of a Journal.

DEC. 18, 1780. Gave an order to Major Broughton of Marblehead, a returning prisoner, for 5 louis, to help him down to a seaport.

Certified Capt. Jasme La Cause's commission and other American papers.

Wrote to Mr. Hodgson, London, that I had received his account of the expenditure of the 100£ on the prisoners, and promised him 150£ more.

Gave a letter of recommendation of l'Abbe Robin to Mr. Williams of Boston; and sent it after him by an officer, who is to go if he can in the "Ariel." Sent by the same person some newspapers to Congress.

Consented, in conversation with Mr. Grand, that Mr. Williams, on being put in possession of the policies of insurance of the ship "Marquis de la Fayette," for 200,000 livres, should draw on me for the freight to that amount.

Mr. Chaumont writes, pressing an advance of the money on security.

Reply'd that if the security was such as the Congress banker approved of, I would advance the sum.

Heard that transports are taking up here for America, and that bank bills in England had been counterfeited to a great amount.

Dec. 19. Went to Versailles. At M. Vergennes much was said to me in favour of M. de Chaumont's demand. It was owned that he had been wrong in demanding as a right what he ought to have asked as a favour; but that affairs among friends should not be transacted with rigour, but amicably and with indulgent allowances. I found I had been represented as unkindly exact in the business. I promised to do all in my power to make it easy to M. de Chaumont. He came to me in the evening after my return, — with much heat against M. Grand, which I endeavoured to allay, as it was really very unjust. Offered him to accept his bills drawn on me, as the operation thro' Mr. Wms., at Nantes, would take too much time to suit his exigencies. He said he would consult with his banker. Exclaimed much against the judgment at Nantes, &c.

Requested Mr. Grand to transfer out of the public cash the amount of the several balances of my private accounts with the Congress, and give me credit for the same in my particular account.

Dec. 20, 1780. Certified, or as they call it here legalised, the papers relative to the taking a Portuguese ship by the "Mars," of Boston, and sent them to the Port^e Ambassr.

Accepted M. de Chaumont's drafts, dated Nov. 10, for the 200,000 ls. freight at 4 usances, and he gave me his engagement to return the money in case the ship "Marquis de la Fayette" did not arrive at l'Orient to take in our goods.

Prince de Montbarry, Ministre de la Guerre, resigns. His successor not yet known.

Dec. 21. Wrote to M. de Chaumont pressingly for his account with the Congress, that it may be settled now Mr. Deane is here. M. de Segur succeeds the P. de Montbarry.

Dec. 22. Received an account between Mr. Chaumont and Mr. Deane, which includes Congress article [mutilated] copy it, as it must be sent to Mr. Deane.

Dec. 23. Hear by letters from l'Orient of the departure of Capt. Jones in the "Ariel" the 18th.

Dec. 24. Received Goulade and Moylan's account of fresh expenses, upwards of 20,000 ls., by Capt. Jones. 2 Young Englishmen, Scot and Williams, would go to America; discouraged them.

Dec. 25. Gave an order to Mr. Grand to remit 150£ sterling to Mr. Wm. Hodgdon, London, for the relief of American prisoners.

Received information from a good hand, that the G. Pensionaire had been with Sir J. Y.,[1] and acquainted him that an answer would be given to his Memorials, but that it could not be precipitated contrary to the Constitution; it was necessary to have the advice of the provinces. The S. Ht.[2] has behaved well in the resolutions for arming. The Duke A. G. C., the Pensionary of Amsterdam, a brave steady man.

Dec. 26. Went to Versailles to assist at the ceremony

[1] Sir Joseph Yorke, English Minister in Holland.

[2] Stadtholder.

of condolence on the death of the Empress Queen.[1] All the foreign Ministers in deep mourning, flopp'd hats, and crape, long black cloaks, &c. The Nuncio pronounced the compliments to the King, and afterwards to the Queen in her apartments. M. de Vergennes told me of the war declared by England against Holland. Visit at the new Ministers of War and Marine; neither of them at home. Much fatigued by the going twice up and down the palace stairs, from the tenderness of my feet and weakness of my knees; thereupon did not go the rounds. Declined dining with Mr. de Vergennes, as inconsistent with my present mode of living, which is simple till I have recovered my strength. Took a partridge with M. de Chaumont. No news yet of Count d'Estaing.

Dec. 27. *Wednesday.* Much talk about the new war. Hear of the hurricane in the West Indies. English fleet under Adm. Darby put into port. Wrote to J. Williams, at Nantes, to send advice to America by every possible opportunity of the English declaration against Holland.

Dec. 28. *Thursday.* Mr. Grand had some time since carried an advance of my salary for one quarter 15,000 ls. out of the public monies, to my private account; and I afterwards gave him a receipt for that sum, which should have been mentioned before.

Dec. 29. *Friday.* Went by particular invitation to the Sorbonne, to an Assembly of the Faculty of Physick in the College Hall, where we had the *éloge* of my friend M. Dubourg, and other pieces. Suffer'd by the cold.

M. de Chaumont has [mutilated] J. Williams's draft on me for 48,000 ls. on account of the Cloth, but declined, I know not why, presenting it. I ought to give him a [mutilated].

Dec. 30. *Saturday.* Breakfasted at Mad. Brillon's.

[1] Maria Theresa died November 29.

Received of M. Grand 4,800 ls. on private account, which was put into the hands of W. T. Franklin to pay bills and family expenses.

Dec. 31. *Sunday.* Much company at dinner; among others M. Perrier and M. Wilkinson, ingenious mechanicians, M. Romaine, of Hackensack in the Jerseys.[1] No news.

Jan. 1, 1781. *Monday.* News that an expedition is on foot against Jersey and Guernsey; some frigates, with transports and 2,500 men, having sailed from Granville the 26th past.

Mr. Dana is returned from Holland, which he left the beginning of last month. Mr. Adams remains there, who writes me, Dec. 1, that there is little or no hopes of a loan.[2]

Jan. 2. *Tuesday.* Went to Versailles. No Foreign Ministers there but one or two; the rest having been there yesterday. Visited the new Secretary at War who was very polite. Wrote at M. de Castries's, Minister of the Marine. Not strong enough to go up to M. de Maurepas. Visited M. le Roy, and dined with M. and Made. de Renneval.[3] News of disappointment of the Jersey expedition. Wind and tide contrary [mutilated] the offices in part.

Jan. 3. *Wednesday.* Letters from Holland. The Dutch seem not to have known on the 28th past that war was actually declared on them. Informed here that the English Court had sent copies of the papers taken with Mr. Laurens to the Northern Courts with aggravated complaints against the States General; and that the States had also sent their justification. Important news expected by the return of the courier.

[1] Theodoric Dirck Romayne: afterwards minister at Schenectady, a founder of Union College.

[2] Dip. Corr. v., 382.

[3] Gérard de Rayneval.

JAN. 4. *Thursday.* Learnt that the States had given orders for building 100 ships of war. Gave an order on Mr. Grand on paying Sabbatier's balance, the sum 3,526 ls. 18. 6., being for carriage of the clothing.

JAN. 5. *Friday.* Signed recommendation, to the Ministers, of M. de la Neuville, officer formerly in the American service.

JAN. 6. *Saturday.* Accepted a number of loan office bills this day, and every day of the past week. No news yet of Count D'Estaing, which begins to give great uneasiness, as his fleet was not provided for so long a voyage.

JAN. 7. *Sunday.* News of the safe arrival of Count D'Estaing at Brest. More accounts of the terrible hurricane in the West Indies. Accepted a vast number of loan office bills. Some of the new drafts begin to appear.

JAN. 8. *Monday.* Accepted many bills. Hear from Holland that they had but just received news of the declaration of war against them; and that the English church was burnt at the Hague, unknown by what means.

JAN. 9. *Tuesday.* Count D'Estaing arrives at Passy. Hear of ships arrived at L'Orient from America. No letters come up. Indisposed, and did not go to Court.

JAN. 10. *Wednesday.* Letters arrived from Philadelphia. Reports there of advantages gained to the southward; and that Leslie had quitted Virginia. Informed that my recall is to be moved in Congress. News that the troops have made good their landing in Jersey, and taken all but the Castle.

JAN. 11. *Thursday.* Gave Mr. Dana copies of the letters between M. de Sartine and me concerning Mr. Dalton's affair. Proposed to him to examine the public accounts now, while Mr. Deane is here, which he declined.

JAN. 12. *Friday.* Sign acceptation of many bills; they come thick.

JAN. 13, 1781. *Saturday.* Learn that there is a violent commotion in Holland. That the people are violently exasperated against the English, — have thrown some into the canals; and those merchants of Amsterdam who have been known to favour them dare not appear in the streets. That the return of the Empress to Russia brings good accounts of the favourable disposition of the Empress.

D'ESTAING.

JAN. 14. *Sunday.* Mr. Grand acquaints me that he learns from Mr. Cotin, Banker of Mr. de Chaumont, that the "Marquis de la Fayette" will be stopped by creditors of M. Chaumont, unless 50,000 crowns are advanced, and submitted it to my consideration whether I had not better buy the ship. Vexed with the long delay on so many frivolous pretences, and seeing no end to them, and fearing to embarrass myself still farther in affairs that I do not understand, I took at once the resolution of offering our contract for that ship to the government, to whom I hoped it might be agreeable to have her as a transport, as our goods would not fill her, she being gauged at 1200 tons. Accordingly I requested Mr. Grand to go to Versailles, and propose it to M. de Vergennes.

JAN. 15. *Monday.* Signed an authority to Mr. Bondfield to administer the oath of allegiance to the United States, to Mr. Vaughan.

Accepted above 200 bills, some of them new.

Mr. Grand calls in his return from Versailles, and

acquaints me that Mr. Vergennes desires the proposition to be reduced to writing. Mr. Grand had accordingly made a draft, which he presented for my approbation.

JAN. 16. *Tuesday.* Went to Versailles, and performed all the ceremonies, tho' with difficulty, my feet being still tender.

Left the pacquets for Mr. Jay with M. de Renneval, who promised to send them with the next courier.

Presented Mr. Grand's paper to Mr. de Vergennes, who told me he would try to arrange that matter for me. I acquainted Mr. de Chaumont with the step, who did not seem to approve of it.

Heard of the ill success of the troops in Jersey, who were defeated the same day they landed, — 150 killed, 200 wounded, the rest taken prisoners.

JAN. 17, 1781. *Wednesday.* My birthday [crossed out]. Accepted many bills and wrote some letters.

JAN. 18, '81. *Thursday.* Mr. Grand informs me that he has been at Versailles, and spoke with M. de Vergennes and M. de Renneval [Rayneval]. That the Minister declined the proposition of taking the vessel on account of the government, but kindly offered to advance me the 150,000 ls. if I chose to pay that sum. He brought me also the project of an engagement drawn up by M. Cottin, by which I was to promise that payment, and he and Co. were to permit the vessel to depart. He left this paper for my consideration.

JAN. 19. *Friday.* Considering this demand of Messrs. Cottin and Jauge as an imposition, I determined not to submit to it, and wrote my reasons.

Relieved an American captain with 5 guineas, to help him to l'Orient.

JAN. 20. *Saturday.* Gave a pass to a Bristol merchant to go to Spain. He was recommended to me as

having been a great friend to American prisoners. His name [blank].

JAN. 21. *Sunday.* Mr. Jauge comes to talk with me about the ship; and intimated that if I refused to advance the 150,000 ls. I should not only be deprived of the ship, but lose the freight I had advanced. I absolutely refused to comply.

JAN. 22. *Monday.* Mr. Grand informs me that Mr. Williams had drawn on me for 25,000 livres to enable him to pay returned acceptances of M. de Chaumont. I ordered payment of his drafts. Received a letter from Mr. Williams, and wrote an answer; which letters explained this affair. Letter from Mr. Chaumont informing me he had received remittances from America. I congratulated him.

JAN. 23. *Tuesday.* Went to Court, and performed all the round of levees, tho' with much pain and difficulty, thro' the feebleness of my knees. Mr. Vergennes is ill, and unable to hold long conferences. I dined there and had some conversation with Mr. Renneval, who told me I had misunderstood the proposition of advancing the 150,000 livres, or it had not been rightly represented to me. That it was not expected of me to advance more for M. de Chaumont; that the advance was to have been made with M. Vergennes, &c. I see clearly, however, that the paper offered me to sign by Messrs. Cottin and Co. would have engaged me to be accountable for it. Had some conference with the Nuncio, who seemed inclined to encourage American vessels to come to the Ecclesiastical State, acquainting me they had two good ports to receive us, Civita Vecchia and Ancona, where there was a good deal of business done, and we should find good *vente* for our fish, &c. Hear I [blank].

JAN. 24. *Wednesday.* A great number of bills. Visit

at M. de C.'s in the evening; found him cold and dry. Receive a note from Mr. Searle, acquainting me with his arrival [or dismissal ?] from Holland on Saturday last.

JAN. 25. *Thursday.* Hear that M. de Chaumont pays again, being enabled by his remittances [blank] bills. Holland begins to move, and gives great encouragement [blank]. Mr. de L. comes to see me, and demands breakfast; cheerful and frank. Authorize Mr. Grand to pay the balance of Messrs. Jay and Carmichael's salaries; and Mr. Digges's bills.

JAN. 26. *Friday.* Went to Paris to visit Princess Dashkaw;[1] not at home. Visit Prince and Princess Masserano. He informs me that he despatches a messenger [to Madrid] on Tuesday. Visit Duke de Rochefoucault and Made. la Duchesse D'Enville. Visit Messrs. Dana and Searle; not at home. Leave invitations to dine with me on Sunday. Visit Comte D'Estaing; not at home. Mr. Turgot; not at home. Accept bills.

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD.

JAN. 27. *Saturday.* Write to Madrid and answer all Mr. Jay's and Mr. Carmichael's letters received during my illness.

JAN. 28. *Sunday.* Mr. Dana comes; Mr. Searle excuses himself. Invite him for Tuesday.

JAN. 29, 1781. *Monday.* Hear of the arrival of the "Duke of Leinster," with Mr. Ross, at Philadelphia, which gives me great pleasure, as she had much cloth, &c., for the Congress. Despatched the letters for Madrid.

Here the Journal abruptly stops. It illustrates the difficulties of Franklin's position, which always had the

[1] Katharina Romanouyna Daschkova.

commercial entanglements belonging to a consulate, mixed in with the financial embarrassments of a bankrupt nation, and the diplomatic difficulties which properly belonged to his station. The letters which follow will explain themselves, or are explained by the Journal.

Franklin to Rev'd Père Beccaria.[1]

Passy, near Paris, Feby. 19, 1781.

Dear Sir, — I received lately, through the hands of your ambassador, the several ingenious pieces of your writing, which you did me the honour to send me. At present I am so engaged in public affairs that I cannot give the attention I wish to philosophical subjects, which used to afford me so much pleasure. It grieves me to hear of the long continuance of your illness. Science suffers with you. I beg leave to recommend the bearer, M. Steinsky, to your civilities. He is professor of Physics at Prague. With great and unalterable esteem,

I have the honour to be, Reverend and Dear Sir,
Your most obedient and most humble servant,
B. Franklin.

Franklin to Mr. Fournier, jeune.[2]

À Passy, ce 2 Mars, 1781.

En examinant les matrices, Monsieur, je ne trouve pas celui que du (p) dans le mot *capable* de votre epreuve. Il y'manque aussi une longue *s* & une longue *j* & la point,

[1] G. B. Beccaria, the electrician, — not the moralist, who was C. B. Beccaria. Franklin himself had translated Beccaria's book, "Dell' Electrismo Artifiziale."

[2] We print this letter as an illustration, from a large number, of the interest with which Franklin kept up the private printing-office at Passy, the work of which is now so much valued by collectors.

la virgule, & l'apostrophe, &c. S'il vous voulez me les envoyer, vous m'obligerez.

J'ai l'honneur d'être.

It has been elsewhere observed that Franklin took a great interest in the new contrivance, introduced in England, for copying manuscripts upon thin paper by a copying-press.

He had sent one of these machines to Turgot, the Economist. After the intrigue which removed him from the French cabinet, just before Franklin's arrival in France, he lived in retirement until his death, on the 20th of March, 1781. Franklin had resumed his early friendly relations with him, and it will be remembered that to Turgot we owe the line, "Eripuit cœlo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis."

Here is a note to his brother, regarding one of the copying-machines. Other letters show that, at the same time, he introduced the machine to Jefferson at home, and into the foreign office of the Congress. The original note is in French.

Franklin to the Marquis Turgot.

Passy, April 25, 1781.

Monsieur le Marquis: — I have the honor to send you by the bearer a book which belongs to the library of your brother, who had the kindness to lend it to me.

A little before his death, I ordered in London for him a machine of a new invention for copying letters or other MSS. It was taken to his house, and placed in the room next that where he slept. As I have never been paid for this machine, and as it may be of no use to you, as I should, also, be glad to oblige one of my friends by giving it to him, — I will ask you to be kind enough to order that it may be sent, with the accessories, to M.

l'Abbé Morellet, Batiment neuf des Feuillants, Rue St. Honoré.

Accessories to the Press.

A ream of very thin silk paper.
4 sheets of oiled paper.
4 parcels of powder to make the ink.
2 bottles.
[A bit] of green woolen cloth.
Several sheets of card board and a little English book with directions for using the machine.

As an illustration of personal habits, — of hand, and indeed of thought, — it may be well to print here, from a separate scrap of paper, the words which came to Franklin's mind one day, when he was trying experiments with copying ink. The slip, in his own writing, has been preserved. But the reader will observe that if any thing can be written without thought that it is to be printed a century after, it is such a bit of experimental writing.

JULY, 11, 1781, at noon.

My ink with a little loaf sugar.

So the pure limpid stream, etc.

So when some angel, by divine command,
With rising tempests shakes a guilty land
(Such as of late o'er pale Britannia past),
Calm and serene he drives the furious blast.
And pleased the Almighty's orders to perform,
Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm.

The same ink without sugar.

It must be so. Plato, thou reasonest well.
Else, whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after an Eternity? Or whence this secret dread
Of falling into nought? Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
'T is the divinity that stirs within us;
'T is heaven itself that points out an hereafter.

On the 17th of March, by appointment with Vergennes, Franklin met him, for an explicit understanding what aids Congress might expect from France in the course of the year 1781. Vergennes assured him anew of the King's good-will, but said that Franklin himself must know how great were their expenses; these would prevent the loan of twenty-five million livres which had been asked for. Nor could the King permit an American loan to be sought in the general market in his dominions, because such a loan might prejudice those he was himself under the necessity of obtaining. But, as an evidence of the King's friendship, he had determined to give the States six million livres, not as a loan but as a free gift. This was to be independent of the three millions which Franklin had before obtained to pay the drafts for interest, &c., for the coming year.

In sending news so favorable to Huntington, the President of Congress, Franklin took the occasion to offer his own resignation. The reader has seen that he had learned from America, on the 10th of January, that his recall was to be moved for in Congress. Such was one result of the feeling that he was not up to the highest mark in pressing France to the support of America, — or that he was in French interest, rather than American. But in his letter,[1] there is no sign of disappointment or bad temper. He pleads his age, his late illness, and the confining pressure of the public business. "The constant attendance prevents my taking the air and exercise which my annual journeys formerly used to afford me, — and which contributed much to the preservation of my health." At the same [time] he proposes to remain in Europe until the peace, — perhaps till his death,[2] and offers any service he can render

[1] SPARKS, ix. 4.

[2] Oddly enough, Mr. SPARKS calls this a request to return home, which is exactly what it is not.

to his successor. He still hoped for the arrival of Mr. William Palfrey, the consul-general, whose unexplained loss at sea deprived the national service of a very valuable officer.

In a letter of this time to Mr. Carmichael, who had written from Madrid to warn him against American intrigues and enemies, he says: "Having in view at present no other point to gain but that of rest, I do not take their malice so much amiss, as it may further my project, and perhaps be some advantage to you. Lee and Izard are open, and so far honorable enemies; the Adamses, if enemies, are more covered.[1] I never did any of them the least injury, and can conceive no other source of their malice but envy."

This letter to Congress brought the opposition in Philadelphia to an end, so far that Congress, as we have seen, refused to receive his resignation, and named him as one of the five commissioners for negotiating a peace; in which capacity he served, as the reader knows. We reserve to a separate chapter notes of the various proposals of peace, by mediation, — and by direct overtures from agents of Lord North, or other members of the Administration in England.

When Congress learned that Mr. Laurens had been taken prisoner, they appointed Mr. Adams, already in Holland, to conduct their negotiations there. Mr. Adams had been disappointed in his hopes for opening a loan in Holland. He did not, at first, get money enough to pay the expenses of the proposals. In the following letter Franklin acknowledges Mr. Adams's notification of his new commission.

PASSY, May. 11, 1781.

SIR, — I am honoured with your excellency's letter of the 27th past, acquainting me with your appointment as

[1] Mr. SPARKS omitted these names.

Minister Plenipotentiary to the States General, on which please to accept my compliments and best wishes for success in your negotiations.

We have just received advice here, that M. la Motte Piquet met with the English convoy of Dutch ships taken at St. Eustatia, and has retaken 21 of them. The men-of-war that were with them escaped, after making the signal for every one to shift for himself.

A vessel is arrived at L'Orient from Philadelphia which brings letters for the Court down to the 25th of March. Mine are not yet come up. M. de Renneval,[1] from whom I had all the above intelligence, tells me they contain no news of importance. I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

Franklin to Francis Dana.

Passy, May 11, 1781.

Dear Sir, — I received your favour of the 1st instant, and immediately applied to Mr. Grand, our banker, to furnish you with the credit you desired at Amsterdam. He acquainted me that having a correspondent at Petersburgh, could give you a direct credit there; and that the Chancellor, Count Osterman, being an old friend of his, he would write and recommend you. I accepted his proposition of a direct credit at Petersburgh, supposing that would be more convenient to you than receiving the money in Holland; but I declined his letter to Count d'Osterman till you should desire it, as you did not propose immediately to assume your public character; and I requested him to recommend you for the present only to his banker, as a gentleman travelling for curiosity, &c. Mr. Grand writes to you by this post, and sends his letter of credit. On second thoughts, if you should have occasion for a part of the money in Holland, you can

[1] Rayneval, — always so spelt by Franklin.

draw on me for the sum you want, and I will honour your bill; in which case you will receive so much less on the Petersburgh credit. I should have answered your letter sooner if the course of the posts had permitted it. But you know the letters received here from Holland on Monday, cannot be answered till the Friday following.

I most heartily wish you a good journey, and all the success imaginable in your negotiation, — being with great esteem,

Dear Sir, &c., &c.

Franklin to "His Excell'y, John Hancock, Esq., Govr. of the Mass. Bay."

Passy, May 14, 1781.

Sir, — Permit me to repeat my congratulations on your election to the Government of your country, and my best wishes for your health and happiness.

A privateer of this country having taken an English packet bound to New York, with her despatches, some of which may be of particular use to your State, that your excellency should see, as they relate to the enemy's posts and proposed operations in its neighborhood, and others, which tho' of a more general nature are interesting to Massachusetts Bay as a part of the whole United States, I have had copies taken of them for you, which I enclose. Other copies have gone by different conveyances to Congress.

With great and sincere esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, sir,

Your Excellency's, &c.

[1] Hancock was the first Governor of Massachusetts. Franklin, or his clerk, does not observe that the word "Bay" has been dropped from the name of the newly organized Commonwealth.

Franklin to Col. John Laurens.

PASSY, May 17, 1781.

DEAR SIR, — Inclosed is the order you desire for another hundred louis. Take my blessing with it, and my prayers that God may send you safe and well home with your cargoes. I would not attempt persuading you to quit the military line, because I think you have the qualities of mind and body that promise your doing great service, and acquiring honour in that line. Otherwise I should be happy to see you again here as my successor, having sometime since written to Congress requesting to be relieved, and believing, as I firmly do, that they could not put their affairs in better hands. I shall ever be,

Most affectionately yours, &c.

On the 19th of May, Franklin had closed a letter to John Adams by this rather significant paragraph: "Your Excellency has done me the honor of announcing to me your appointment. I hope soon to return the compliment by informing you of my demission. I find the various employments of merchant, banker, judge of admiralty, consul, &c., &c., besides my Ministerial function, too multifarious and too heavy for my old shoulders, and have therefore requested Congress that I may be relieved; for in this point I agree even with my enemies, that another may easily be found." As he supposed by this time that John Adams and Samuel Adams were among these "enemies," this parting shaft was aimed home.

Questions regarding the expenditure of the King's gift of six million livres began to arise immediately. The French government were not pleased when they learned that Col. John Laurens and others proposed to spend much of it in Holland. They intended apparently that it should be spent in America, and had been careful, indeed,

to stipulate that it should be confided there to Washington, or spent on his order. Vergennes says distinctly that he does not mean that Committees of Congress shall finger it. Certainly it was not very gracious in the crowd of American agents, when Franklin had obtained this timely gift, to say that they would not spend it in the purchase of French stores, but would go with it to Holland, where they could use it more to their advantage. This is, however, what they did say. Vergennes writes a very tart letter on this subject. "I do not know whether Mr. Laurens purchased the clothing in Holland on account of Congress; I only know (and you were informed of it at the same time) that this officer was to employ for his purchases *in France* part of the six millions, and that the residue of this sum was to be sent to America." In point of fact, Colonel Laurens did take with him to America two million and a half of the six millions; one and a half million was sent to Holland, and the remainder (and more) was spent in Paris for stores. Franklin resented the suggestion made by William Jackson, an aid of General Lincoln's who had accompanied Colonel Laurens to Europe, that Laurens had obtained the gift of the six million livres. "The six million," as he wrote to Jackson, "was a free gift from the King's goodness (not a loan to be repaid with interest), and was obtained by my application, long before Colonel Laurens's arrival. What Colonel Laurens did obtain, — and a great service I hope it will prove, — was a loan upon interest of ten millions, to be borrowed upon the credit of this court in Holland. I have not heard that this loan has yet produced anything, and therefore I do not know that a single livre exists, or has existed in Europe, of his procuring for the States. On the contrary, he and you have drawn from me considerable sums, — as necessary for your ex-

penses, — and he left me near forty thousand livres to pay for the "Alliance," and moreover engaged me in a debt in Holland, which I understood might amount to about fifteen thousand pounds sterling, and which you contrived to make fifty thousand pounds."[1]

This letter was written to Colonel Jackson at Amsterdam, and must have shown to him and to Mr. Adams, who was also there, that Franklin, while good-natured, understood his rights, and knew what his responsibilities were. In the midst of these complications came the news that the great shipment of twenty-eight cannon, with large quantities of saltpetre and gunpowder, with supplies of clothing also, which had been sent, under convoy of the "Alliance," in the "Marquis de Lafayette," had all been lost in that vessel.[2] In a letter to Congress of July 11, Franklin says he is soliciting supplies of clothing, arms, &c., to replace this loss. In the same letter he loyally praises Col. Jackson's true zeal for the service.

On the sixth of June, meanwhile, Robert Morris had been able to write him that he had been appointed Superintendent of Finance. From that moment, as the American reader knows, order came in the place of chaos, and light began to dispel darkness. On the 26th of July, Franklin begins a systematic correspondence with him, and explains in sufficient detail the condition of finance in his bureau, of which the sum is, — as it was so apt to be, with the exchequer of America, in Paris or in Philadelphia, — "You have nothing to draw upon."

On the 19th of June, the President of Congress informed him that his resignation was not accepted, but that, on the other hand, he had been appointed, with four other gentlemen, as a commission for the negotiation of

[1] Franklin to Jackson. SPARKS, ix. 52.

[2] She sailed March 29th.

peace, and that another commission authorized the same persons to accept the mediation of the Emperor of Germany and the Empress of Russia. In writing to his true friend Carmichael, Franklin mentions these commissions with pride. "I must buckle again to business, and thank God that my health and spirits are of late improved. I fancy it may have been a double mortification to those enemies you have mentioned to me, that I should ask as a favor what they hoped to vex me by taking from me, and that I should nevertheless be continued." [1]

Writing to Adams he mentions such news as he has received.

Franklin to Adams.

PASSY, Augt. 12, 1781.

SIR, — Since my last, of the 6th inst., there have been several arrivals in France from America. I have letters from Philadelphia of the 20th June, tho' none from Congress. The advices are, that General Greene has taken all the enemy's outposts in S. Carolina and Georgia, and that their possession in those provinces is reduced to Charlestown and Savannah. In North Carolina, they also have Wilmington. Their great force is now under Cornwallis in Virginia, where they are ravaging and burning as usual, M. De la Fayette not being in force to repress them; but Gen. Wayne was on his march to reinforce him, and had passed Annapolis.

I have received the letter from your excellency, enclosing a list of the bills you have lately accepted. I think you did right in accepting them, and hope they are the last that Congress will draw, till they know you have funds to pay them.

I have the honour to be, with respect, sir,

Your Excellency's, &c.

[1] SPARKS, ix. 77.

And later he announces his new appointment in this letter: —

Franklin to Adams.

Passy, Augt. 16, 1781.

Sir, — I have the honour to inform your excellency that I yesterday received despatches from Congress, refusing for the present the dismission I had requested, and ordering me upon an additional service, that of being joined with yourself and Messrs. Jay, H. Laurens, and T. Jefferson in negotiations for peace. I would send you a copy of the commission, and of another which authorises us to accept of the mediation of the Emperor and Empress of Russia, but that I suppose you may have them in the enclosed packet. I shall he glad to learn from your excellency, what steps have already been taken in this important business.

With great regard, &c, &c.,

On the 12th of September, he had the pleasure of writing to Robert Morris, that he had obtained a promise of the sum he wanted to pay for the purchases made in Holland. But still he was "terrified" by the prospect of bills drawn by Congress on what we should call, "the Bank of Faith." At that time the loan in Holland, from which Col. Laurens had hoped so much, "has, of late, some appearances of success." The King complied with his wish of replacing the supplies lost in the "Marquis de Lafayette," and the Ministry took every method of showing Congress and all its representatives in Europe that Franklin was an agent in whom they had entire confidence. "The Count de Vergennes," he writes, "read your instructions while I was with him, and expressed his satisfaction with the unreserved confidence placed in his court by the

Congress, assuring me that they would never have cause to regret it, for that the King had the honor of the United States at heart, as well as their welfare and independence. Indeed, this has already been manifested in the negotiations relative to the plenipotentiaries, and I have had so much experience of his Majesty's goodness to us, in the aids afforded us from time to time, and of the sincerity of this upright and able minister, who never promised me anything which he did not punctually perform, that I cannot but think the confidence well and judiciously placed, and that it will have happy effects."

If Carmichael gave him the impression that the Adamses were his enemies, he permitted that impression to die out. On the 13th of September he wrote to Francis Hopkinson a letter which has been printed, with blanks for the two names. We are able now, from the original manuscript, to insert these names. Franklin said: "At present I do not know of more than two of such enemies that I enjoy, viz., Lee and Izard. I deserve the enmity of the latter, because I might have avoided it by paying him a compliment, which I neglected. That of the former I owe to the people of France, who happened to respect me too much and him too little, — which I could bear, and he could not."

To Mr. Adams, a little later, he wrote: —

Franklin to Adams.

Passy, Oct. 5, 1781.

Sir, — I congratulate your excelly on your recovery. I hope this seasoning will be the means of securing your future health, by accommodating your constitution to the air of that country.

Here are advices from Admiral de Grasse, which left

him the 13th of August coming out of the Straits of Bahama, with 28 sail of the line, bound to Chesapeak Bay: unless he should meet at sea a call to New York from General Washington. He took with him from the islands 3,600 land troops, which with his marines make near 6,000 men capable of acting either against Cornwallis or in the siege of New York; and the 8 sail under M. de Barras at Boston joining him will make a sea force superior to any expected of the enemy in those seas, so that we may hope for some good news from that quarter.

Since the letter your excellency honoured me with, of the 25th of August, I have learnt nothing new of the mediation. It seems to be at present in a state of stagnation. Any further proceedings in it that may come to my knowledge shall be immediately communicated to you. This Court appears attentive, not only to the interest of the United States, but to their honour. England seems not yet tired enough of the war to think seriously of an accommodation, and till then our new commission will hardly afford us much employment, or make it necessary for us to appoint a secretary in its service. I send, however, enclosed a copy of the minute of Congress relating to that appointment. I have not heard of Mr. Dana's arrival at Petersburg: if your excellency has received any communicable advices from him, I shall be glad to see them, and to know whether he is likely to continue there. Enclosed is a letter for him, and another for yourself. They appear to me to have been opened; but they are in the state I received them under cover from Mr. Nesbit of L'Orient.

A letter from America that has been shown me mentions a resolution of Congress to exchange General Burgoyne for Mr. Laurens; but I have never seen that resolution. Do you know anything of it? I have a

letter from Mr. Burke on the subject of that General, which I am at a loss to answer.

I received Mr. Thaxter's letter relating to the mast contracts, and communicated it to Mr. Vergennes, who, I suppose, will write about that affair to M. de la Luzerne. Is it possible that a contract of supplying that article from any of the United States can be executed? I have no conception of the means.

I am glad to hear that the loan from Holland is likely to succeed; for without it, those obtained here for our service will not afford payment of the list, shown me the other day by M. Grand, of your acceptations falling due in November, December, January, and February next, amounting to $217,932\frac{2}{3}$. It is a demand I had no previous knowledge of, and therefore I hope it is not expected of me to answer it. I have accepted the bills mentioned in yours of the 24th past, as drawn by you upon me on that day; but the great sum above mentioned, it will be out of my power to accept it, if you should draw for it, no provision being made for it in our last grants.

With great respect, I have the honour to be, &c., &c.

The summer then closed, with more prosperous outlook and circumstances for the veteran minister than had waited on the months of the springtime of the year. Meanwhile the advices from America seemed more favorable.

A catastrophe to the English arms in the United States was impending, such as is a fit warning for nations which are willing to be governed by courts or oligarchies.

George III. had named Lord George Germaine his secretary for war,— simply because, as Lord George Sackville, he had been pronounced by a court-martial unfit for any

military command; and George III. wished to condemn this act of a court held under his predecessor, George II.

George III. had appointed General Howe to the command in America, because he was the illegitimate descendant of George I., and therefore his own cousin.

Howe had failed, thanks to his own indolence, and to Germaine's incapacity, if one choose to keep out of view the impossibility of success, even for a Clive, in view of the problem given him to solve. Clinton had been appointed his successor, because he knew America, was on the ground, and was second in command.

But Clinton was no favorite at Court. The Earl of Percy, afterward Duke of Northumberland, had retired in disgust from the whole thing. Earl Cornwallis, an officer of great ability, was a favorite at Court, and had his own plans.

Now that we have the whole correspondence, it is melancholy to see how the Home Government, that is, Lord George Germaine, treated these men. One can believe the extraordinary story of Lord Shelburne, that the essential despatches on which Burgoyne's campaign turned, were kept for years in a London pigeon-hole, because Germaine did not like the hand-writing. Clinton and Cornwallis would send home different plans. And each of them would hear in reply, that his plan was wholly approved. Of all which the result was, that Cornwallis, having had a certain measure of success in the Carolinas, cut loose from his base there, and undertook a march northward through Virginia, with the expectation of meeting Clinton. Clinton, however, had not the slightest intention of meeting Cornwallis. He considered him as insubordinate, — as in fact he was, with the excuse that he had independent orders from home.

Napoleon's bon-mot, of the next generation, was fully

verified in the issue. "Nothing is worse for an army than a bad general," he said, "unless by misfortune it is under two good ones."

Cornwallis expected to force Clinton's co-operation. Clinton refused to be forced. Cornwallis advanced as far as Hanover in Virginia. Here he received Clinton's final refusal. Cornwallis then determined "to obey orders even if he broke owners." He retired to York, near the mouth of James River, because Clinton had so directed him, — and there expected a fleet from New York to take him to that place.

Lafayette was skirmishing in front of him with an inferior force. To the day he died, in 1834, Lafayette had the happy feeling that his handling of this force compelled Cornwallis' retreat. In truth, it was due to the arrival at Hanover of Clinton's imperturbable refusal to march on land to meet him. Cornwallis turned, fortified himself at York, and so the end came.

The moment Washington heard of his retreat he moved, days before Clinton in New York took the alarm, and by rapid marches across New Jersey, struck the head of Chesapeake Bay. Here he piled his men into every vessel which would float, and appeared in front of Yorktown, to the joy of Lafayette and Wayne, who had followed Cornwallis there. Despatches had been promptly sent to the French Admiral, the Count de Grasse, in the West Indies. Fortunately these despatches met him, and his squadron closed the opening of Chesapeake Bay.

The moment Clinton did take the alarm, he forgot pride and insubordination, and attempted with a large force, to come to the relief of his petted and spoiled second in command.

But he was too late. The great drama was to close with a denouement worthy of the occasion, of the actors,

and of all the acts which had gone before. On the 17th of October, 1781, Cornwallis surrendered his whole army and munitions, all his prisoners of war, and the naval forces under his command, in one act of capitulation. Clinton learned of the great ruin as he arrived outside the bay, and returned to New York.[1]

The French commanders at once sent the great news to Paris, by their fastest frigate. For once, the officer despatched with the intelligence brought his news with no rumor in advance. It seems to have reached Paris on the morning of the 20th. On the 19th Franklin had written to Vergennes the following letter: —

Franklin to Vergennes.

Passy, Nov. 19, 1781.

Sir, — I have the honour of sending to your excellency some advices I have just received. As the letter from Virginia was received at Newcastle, a town on the Delaware, 40 miles below Philadelphia, and probably after the dates of your letters from thence, perhaps you may not have heard before that M. de Barras had joined M. de Grasse, and that Northern troops under the Generals Rochambeau and Washington had joined the Marquis de la Fayette, and invested Cornwallis at York.

I am, with great respect, &c., &c.

It will be observed that he only speaks of the junction of the French squadrons, and of the completion of the investment. Vergennes had the pleasure of sending him, the next day, the news of the victory. To this Franklin replies thus: —

[1] Among the officers of his fleet was the young Prince, William Henry, afterwards William IV., who thus made an unfortunate début in the business of ruling empires.

Franklin to Vergennes.

Passy, Nov. 20, 1781.

Sir, — Your very obliging letter communicating the news of the important victory at York gave me infinite pleasure. The very powerful aid afforded by his Majesty to America this year has rivetted the affections of all that people, and the success has made millions happy. Indeed, the king appears to me from this and another late event to be *le plus grand faiseur d'heureux* that this world affords. May God prosper him, his family and nation, to the end of time! I am, with respect, &c., &c.

From this moment all was gratulation. The news, not unnaturally, reached England by way of France. "How did Lord North take it?" "As he would have taken a cannon-ball in the heart," Lord George Germaine replied to that question.

The French and American authorities published the full accounts they received. They translated for the widest circulation Washington's Order of the Day.

Extracts from the General Orders of the Day for Oct. 20, 1781.

The General congratulates the army on the glorious event of yesterday.

The generous proofs which his Most Christian Majesty has given of his attachment to the Cause of America, while it undeceives those among our enemies who have been most blinded, ought to convince them of the consequences of the alliance, so fortunate and decisive, and ought to inspire all citizens of the United States with sentiments of the most unchangeable gratitude.

The most numerous and most powerful fleet which ever appeared in these waters, commanded by an admiral whose good fortune and ability promised the greatest success, an army selected with the greatest care both for officers and soldiers,— these were remarkable pledges of his affection for the United States. The union of these powerful forces assured to us the brilliant success which we have now obtained.

The General avails himself of this occasion to beg his Excellency the Count de Rochambeau to receive the expression of his lively gratitude for the counsel and assistance that he has always received from him. He wishes also to express his most cordial thanks to the generals Baron de Viomenil, Chevalier de Chatellux, Marquis de St. Simon, and Comte de Viomenil, and to Brigadier General de Choisy (who held an independent command) for the admirable manner in which they worked for the success of the common cause. He hopes that the Count de Rochambeau will be kind enough to testify at once to the army which he commands the high opinion which the General has formed of the distinguished merit of the officers and soldiers of the different corps. He begs him to present in his name to the regiment of Gatinois and of Deux-Ponts the two bronze pieces of artillery which they took from the enemy, and he hopes that they will keep these pieces as a memorial of the courage with which, sword in hand, they captured the enemy's redoubt on the night of the 14th, and that they may thus serve to perpetuate the remembrance of an occasion in which officers and soldiers vied with each other in the display of the most distinguished courage.

If the General should specially thank all those who deserved his thanks he would have to name the whole army. He is obliged by his wishes, his duty, and his gratitude,

to express to the major-generals Lincoln, the Marquis de Lafayette, and Steuben, his acknowledgments for the arrangements which they made in the trenches, to Gen. Du Portail, and to Col. Quevenal, for the ability and skill which was displayed in the laying out of the works, to Gen. Knox and to Col. Daberville for the care and indefatigable attention with which they accelerated the transport of the artillery and munitions, as well as for their judicious use of them, and the activity which they showed in the batteries. He begs the officers whom he has just named to convey his thanks to the officers and soldiers of the corps which they respectively command.

The General would show himself guilty of a singular ingratitude, such as he hopes he may never be guilty of, if he neglected to express in the most distinct terms his thanks to his Excellency Gov. Nelson, for the assistance which he has personally received from him, as well as from the militia which he commanded, which deserves for its activity, its courage, and emulation, the most distinguished applause.[1]

The importance of the blow now struck by the United States will be an ample compensation to all the army for the danger and fatigue which it has borne with so much patriotism and firmness.

[1] This passage is worth preserving from its relation to the domestic politics of Virginia. Thomas Nelson, Jr., one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, was the Governor of Virginia at this time, as successor to Mr. Jefferson. The new constitution required that all his public measures should be approved by the Council. This was impossible at a time when, in consequence of the invasion of the State, the Council could not be kept together, and Nelson acted on his own responsibility. He was afterwards tried for this usurpation, and acquitted honorably. It is undoubtedly with a knowledge of his position that Washington speaks thus cordially. Lord Cornwallis occupied Gov. Nelson's house at Yorktown all through the siege, and it was struck by the balls of the successful armies.

That the public joy may be general among all our troops, the General orders that all soldiers now in confinement shall be set at liberty, and shall rejoin their respective commands.

Divine service will be celebrated to-morrow in all the brigades or divisions. The Commander-in-Chief recommends all the army which is not on duty to be present, with that serious attention and that profound gratitude which we owe to repeated and striking marks of the protection of Providence.

By his Excellency,

GEORGE WASHINGTON, &c., &c.

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